A Serious
EXPOSTULATION
With that Party in
SCOTLAND,
Commonly known by the Name of
WHIGS.

Wherein is modestly and plainly laid open the inconsistency of their Practices;

I. *With the Safety of humane Society.*
II. *With the Nature of the Christian Religion.*
III. *Their two* Covenants *are historically related, and prov'd to be no sufficient Warrant for what they do.*
IV. *Their new Doctrine of a pretended Forfeiture, is prov'd to be groundless.*

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A ſerious Expoſtulation with that Party in *Scotland*, commonly known by the name of *Whigs*.

WITH what horror muſt one look back upon the deplorable ſtate of this wretched Kingdom theſe 45 years, ſince the unhappy Principles of Subjects taking Arms againſt the Lawfull Magiſtrate under pretence of Religion firſt prevailed among us! Should I here impartially ſet down the ſtrange Diſtractions that tore us in pieces, the Rivers of Blood that were ſhed, and the manifold Miſeries that we and our Fathers for many years groaned under, I might ſeem perhaps to affect the writing a Tragedy, or the raiſing tranſports of paſſion in my Readers breaſt. But, alas! the diſmall effects of thoſe Convulſions are ſtill ſo viſible, that as they will juſtify all that can be ſaid upon this Subject; ſo at the ſame time they make it needleſs. When we had fought our ſelves into Bondage in the late unnatural War, and had no way left to remove the juſt Scourges of Rebellion, beſides our prayers and tears, which at length obtain'd of God the recovery of our ancient Government, Rights and Properties, it was to be hop'd that the freſh remembrance of what we had felt, would have frighted at leaſt the preſent Generation from all thoughts of renewing our Sufferings, and have kept our Soveraign's Reign as free from Blood, as God was pleaſed to make his Reſtauration. But wofull experience

has prov'd how ſoon ſo great a deliverance was forgotten: before the cicatrice of the late Wound was well cloſed, we made haſte to open it again. *Pentland* Hills, and *Bothwell*-Bridge will ſtand for laſting Monuments both of our Ingratitude to God, and of our Diſloyalty to his Vicegerent. Nor do we only adhere to thoſe wicked Principles which have already coſt the Nation ſo dear, but even outdo them by new and more dangerous Poſitions. Our Fathers, without caſting off all reverence for the Government, inſiſted only upon ſome pretended Exceſſes, which they pretended to redreſs. But ſome among us of late, by taking upon them to lay aſide Him who had undoubted right to govern, do ſtrike at the very Root, and endeavour to deſtroy the whole ancient Conſtitution at one blow. They ſet up for a further degree of Sanctity and Reformation, which we have unhappily brought into ſuch a corruption of Morals, as has not been hitherto known among Chriſtians. Are not Aſſaſſinations taught, as well as practis'd among us? and thoſe who ſuffer for the baſeſt of Murders, are they not cry'd up for Martyrs? Are not the minds of many debauch'd to that ſtrange degree, as to glory in Opinions, and die for Doctrines, which others cannot hear mention'd without horror? Do not men, pretending to no ordinary meaſure of Chriſtianity, every day commit and allow of actions whereof Heathens would be aſham'd? and in one word, Can any thing be ſo wickedly contriv'd by thoſe of the Party, as not to be cloak'd with the ſpecious title of Zeal for Chriſt? Hence it is that Atheiſts and Profane perſons take occaſion to ſcoff at our holy Religion; a reproach is hereby brought upon the Reformation, which always charg'd Popery with Rebellion. The reſt of Mankind look upon us as Enemies, and Contemners of the moſt ſacred ties of Religion and Society. Nor is it to be doubted but if we go on in ſuch brutal tenets and practices, our Land will again become a field of Blood. For can we

expect

expect that the Government will thus give way to its own Diſſolution? or ſuffer us to go on in courſes ſo inconſiſtent with the publick ſafety? When ſofter Methods prove ineffectual, will it not be forced to defend it ſelf by proceeding to the utmoſt ſeverities? And I dread to think how when the wrath of God, and of our injur'd Prince, ſhall at length purſue us for our unaccountable obſtinacy, we cannot any where expect either refuge or pity.

This terrible proſpect of what is moſt likely to come to paſs, has ſo wrought upon me in my retirement, that notwithſtanding the Circumſtances of my preſent condition, which ſecure me as much from any ſhare in my Native Countrey's danger as my Conſcience doth from its guilt. I am reſolv'd to diſcharge the duty of a ſincere Chriſtian and of a faithful Patriot, in laying open my thoughts upon this occaſion. Now that thoſe, for whoſe ſakes this diſcourſe is undertaken, may both the better underſtand, and the leſs partially read it, I ſhall endeavour to fit my ſtile to the meaneſt capacities, and to avoid, as much as poſſible, all ſharpneſs of expreſſion, being of my ſelf moſt inclin'd to Lenitives; and having often obſerv'd that gentle treatment is moſt apt to affect Noble Tempers, I ſhall therefore beg of my Countreymen that they will be pleaſed to lay aſide prejudice for a little while, and conſider fairly with me theſe four things.

I. If ſuch courſes be not really inconſiſtent with the ſafety of any Government.

II. If they be not contrary to the nature of the Chriſtian Religion.

III. If what is alledged from the obligation lying upon us by the late Covenants, be a ſufficient warrant for what we do.

IV. If there be any ground for the new Doctrine of a pretended Forfeiture, which ſome among us inſiſt upon.

First Consideration.

It is necessary in all Civil Constitutions, that the Actions of Particular Persons be directed towards the Publick Good. But most men being apt to steer their course only by the compass of Interest, the Wisdom of no Government has hitherto found out a better way to support it self, than by establishing such an Authority as might see to every man performing his part in relation to the Publick. This last resort of Power, as the very life of the Government, has still been accounted sacred and inviolable; has had all the advantages of Laws in its behalf; has everywhere been arm'd against the attempts of Malice, Faction, or Ambition; nor has any thing been wanting that might enable it to answer the great ends of its Institution, either to administer Justice, secure Property, or maintain Peace and Order.

In whatever hands this Soveraign Power is lodg'd, as with us it is undoubtedly in the King's, there all must be ready to pay an humble deference, not only to countenance Authority when it promotes our Private Interest, but even when it seems least favourable to us, to own that it has power to punish as well as reward, there being no less reason for mens submitting to what Authority thinks proper to inflict upon their breach of the Laws, than for their laying claim to Protection, and other benefits, while they observe them. No severity in the Prince can cancel the obligation that lies upon Subjects, nor put them in Commission to make violent Resistance, seeing this were a taking upon them to reject that Judge, and deny that Authority, which the Laws, the Government, and they Themselves as Members of it, have already own'd to be Supream upon Earth.

Nothing here below can be so perfectly contriv'd as not to retain some inconveniences, and I shall grant a probability

lity, or a poſſibility at leaſt, of Particular Perſons ſuffering ſometimes unjuſtly, to be an inconvenience which neceſſarily accompanies the chief Authority in all Governments. But if there be no other way to ſhun it, than by allowing violent reſiſtance to be lawfull in ſuch caſes, the remedy will queſtionleſs prove much worſe than the diſeaſe. If with the many Laws in the Prince's behalf, there were but one to countenance reſiſting him, this one would in a ſhort time deſtroy all the reſt, and reduce his Authority to an empty name. Or if it were declared lawfull for Subjects only to reſiſt in ſome caſes, who muſt judge when theſe fall out? The Prince could hardly be brought to give Sentence againſt himſelf, to wound his Power by releaſing men from their Allegiance. And if it were left to the judgment of Subjects, it is to be feared that the Determination would be highly partial on their ſide; the caſe of lawfull Reſiſtance would then turn frequent, Obedience would be rare, unleſs ſupported by Intereſt, and Subjects would at this rate only be ſuch to whom and when they pleaſed.

This Principle of Reſiſtance being once allow'd, it neceſſarily opens a door to ſubvert all Authority, and renders the whole deſign of Government ineffectual. How could the Publick Peace be ſecur'd, if there were ways left for Particular perſons lawfully to rebel? Differences could never be decided but by granting a Sentence from which there is no appeal, back'd with a power of executing without danger of oppoſition. There could be no order, were it left to Private men to deſert their ſtations, to turn Judges where they are Parties, and to call Rulers to an account of their Adminiſtration. If we leave Kingly Government, and look upon the moſt Popular Conſtitutions, which are raiſed but one ſtep above Anarchy, even there the chief Magiſtrates are only accountable to the whole Body for their actions: nor can any part of this Body, without the concurrence of the reſt,

meddle

meddle with thoſe that have their Authority from all. Let us ſuppoſe Authority in ſome caſes may be miſtaken or biaſs'd in its deciſions; without doubt we might expect much greater errors and partiality, were every man left to judge of his own performances. If we think it inconvenient that the Prince ſhould be enabled by his Power to injure any Particular Perſon, much worſe would it be to put it in every Particular Perſon's power to be unjuſt to the Prince. To be ſhort, the Supream Power falling ſometimes into no good hands, doth not fruſtrate the chief ends of Government; but if diſcontented ſpirits may find ways lawfully to make oppoſition, nothing can keep it from being diſſolved.

It is moſt plain that Subjects Rights are rather ſecur'd than endanger'd by the Princes not being accountable for his Actions, and that they would ſoon find themſelves at a loſs by being allow'd to reſiſt: for as men are naturally apt to complain, and are allways partial enough to think themſelves moſt hardly dealt with; ſo if they were at liberty to fall upon the Government, in helping to weaken that, they would wound their own Security. The whole Body muſt feel the blow which the Head receives. Life may be preſerved with the hazard or loſs of ſeveral Members, but when the Head is affected, every part languiſhes, and with it all dies. The great foundation then of the Subjects Safety being ſhaken by violating the Prince's Rights, Intereſt it ſelf ſhould teach us to be very tender of them, and never to offer at deſtroying that which appears perhaps inconvenient in one reſpect, but is uſeful and neceſſary in many. If it trouble us to be at the Prince's Mercy, we may remember we are likewiſe under his Protection, and ſo need apprehend none beſides. And this I humbly conceive is a Condition much more deſirable, than by renouncing our Allegiance, unhinging the Government, and getting thus without the reach of an imaginary danger, to draw upon our ſelves the violence

of

of every one that hath ſtrength or wickedneſs enough to hurt us.

And truly our Countrey is at little beholden to us for reſiſting Authority, as we are to our ſelves; for in ſhaking off all duty to our Prince, we encourage others to do the ſame: this muſt involve the Government in conſtant trouble, and deprive us of the bleſſed fruits of Peace, upon which we cannot ſet too high a value. If every one of us be reſolv'd to make good our petty Rights, can we imagine our Prince will tamely paſs from His, which are ſo great? And at this rate there is no avoiding a Civil War, with all its fatal Conſequences, which will fall much heavier upon the Publick, than any thing that any Particular Man or Sort of Men can ſuffer. The Government of the worſt of Princes is infinitely preferable to Anarchy and Confuſion, where Guilty and Innocent are equally obnoxious to Danger; where no Man's Prudence, Vertue, or Merit can give him Sanctuary. *Rome* felt it ſelf much more at eaſe under a *Caligula*, a *Nero*, a *Domitian*, or a *Commodus*, than amidſt the terrible Alarms of a Civil War. This in a few Days ſpilt more of *Rome's* beſt Blood, baniſh'd more Senators, and ruin'd more Families, than any of thoſe Tyrants did in ſeveral Years. But if it went better with the Publick, while ſuch Monſters ſate at the Helm, who were themſelves govern'd, and govern'd others by no better Laws, than what Cruelty, Avarice, Ambition, and the reſt of their unbridled Paſſions ſuggeſted; I am willing ſtill to believe, That none of us are ſo much our own, and our Countrey's Enemies, to prefer Anarchy before the eaſy Yoke of our Indulgent Prince, who's Reign has never yet been ſtain'd with one Act of his Cruelty; Whom Envy it ſelf cannot charge as gratifying his Avarice, or Ambition, at the Expence of his Subjects Fortunes or Lives; but who on the contrary has hitherto made good, what he has been pleaſed, both in Publick and Private, often

ten to declare, That he intends to govern according to the eſtabliſhed Laws of his Kingdoms. And truly we muſt allow it reaſonable, that all his Subjects follow this Royal Pattern, and make the Laws likewiſe the Sandard of their Actions; or if they cannot be brought this length, it is fit that at leaſt they learn patiently to ſubmit, without taxing their Prince of Severity or Injuſtice, for requiring them to obſerve thoſe Rules, by which he himſelf vouchſafes to be govern'd. But if nothing beſides our own private Intereſt will influence us, even this ought to make all tremble at the very Thoughts of diſturbing the Publick Peace, or of ſetting their Countrey on Fire, leſt they themſelves be burnt up in its Aſhes. As no Art can manage this Flame, when it is once kindled; ſo it has always been obſerv'd, that the unhappy Inſtruments of ſuch Tragedies have ſeldom eſcap'd, or, at beſt, the iſſue has prov'd more grievous, than any thing that could have befallen them by keeping to a dutiful Compliance. It muſt then be confeſt, that Men are very ill adviſ'd, to draw inevitable Calamity upon their Countrey, and to ſacrifice the Lives and Fortunes of ſo many thouſands, where the Injuſtice is ſo plain, and the Succeſs of the Undertaking ſo doubtful.

And now me-thinks I hear ſome alledg, That they only endeavour to maintain thoſe Natural Rights and Priviledges to which every Man has an undoubted Title, or that they only ſtand upon ſelf-Defence, which is enjoin'd them by the Law of Nature. But however plauſible ſuch pretences may appear at firſt view, yet when narrowly look'd into, they will not be able to bear them out: for neither the Defence of Natural Rights, nor the Law of Nature, will allow of any ſuch monſtrous Doctrine. As to things which are undoubtedly Natural Rights, all Men, who are Members of Societies, and live under any Rules, do every day part with ſeveral of them, and find a real Advantage in ſo doing, they

they freely reſign ſome natural Rights into the hands of the Publick, which thereupon enſures to them the reſt. And tho by this means their Natural Liberties are brought under the Confinement of Laws, and are in ſome meaſure abridg'd, yet ſtill their Condition is much more comfortable, than if they continued ſingle and independent Perſons, neither owing Obedience as Subjects, nor as ſuch receiving Protection; for in this Caſe the Pleaſure of enjoying all the Priviledges of Nature, with the gilded name of entire Liberty, would be ſufficiently allay'd by the conſtant Terrors and Fears they muſt then live in. Their own natural Rights, without any other Support, would little avail them, nor would their overvalued Freedom fail to determine in Slavery, as ſoon as they met with any ſtronger than themſelves. And thus by ſtanding upon all the Priviledges of their Birth, and every thing that Nature had given them, they ſhould be able to ſecure nothing.

The greateſt Lovers therefore of Freedom, have in all Ages been wiſe enough to ſee an Intereſt in framing themſelves into Bodies under certain Laws, which limited, but withal ſecured thoſe Rights of Nature; and the great Dangers from which this Union freed them, as well as the Advantages that have ariſen from it, made Men agree, to keep nothing back, no not Life it ſelf, when the Publick required it: and this makes it evident, that Self-defence is not enjoin'd by the Law of Nature, becauſe this Law is inviolable; and if it abſolutely required the Preſervation of Life, no Man could then venture it for his Countrey, for his Parents, nor for his Friends, no Criminal could without Sin ſubmit to the Execution of the Judges Sentence; and not to meddle with Chriſt's Death, the Glory of Martyrs would be their Crime, for Violating the Law of Nature by their Voluntary Sufferings. I own Self-defence to be every Man's undoubted Birth-right, one of our deareſt Priviledges, which we are

not to forgo unleſs upon weighty Conſiderations. But the great Fallacy is here, Men are apt to confound Natural Rights, and the Law of Nature, which vaſtly differ. The Law of Nature contains certain general Truths, the Fruit and genuine Reſults of Reflection, the very Impreſſions which God has immediately graven in our Souls, which are not to be violated, and which every Man's Reaſon muſt approve. Whereas the Rights of Nature are frequently diſpenſed with, nor have we any further Title to them, than the Laws of the Government, whereof we are Members, allow us. So that the whole Matter being rightly underſtood, I may boldly ſay, The Law of Nature firſt taught Men to give up their Natural Rights to the Publick, as the wiſeſt Bargain they could make, ſeeing upon their committing their Lives, Liberties and Fortunes to its Truſt, to be diſpos'd of at all times as the Publick ſhould think fit, there is a ſufficient Return made them by the Publick, which in this Caſe undertakes their Protection againſt the whole World.

Second Conſideration.

The great Deſign of the Chriſtian Religion is to reform men inwardly, to calm the Storm, which Pride, Malice, or Love of Revenge are apt to raiſe, which it effects by ſeaſoning the Mind with Humility, Gentleneſs, and Patience. It was chiefly intended to remove Mens Thoughts from Temporal to Spiritual Objects, teaching them in all Conditions to ſhew an entire Reſignation to God, grounded upon a ſure Confidence of his Paternal Care and Protection; and when Men are once arrived at this bleſſed Temper of Spirit, it will diſcover it ſelf in the whole Tenor of their Lives, with

with Relation both to God and their Neighbour. Far from repining at the Divine Providence under the harſheſt Diſpenſations, they will then be ſeen to rejoice in Afflictions; they will cheerfully take up their Croſs, and, notwithſtanding all diſcouragements, will keep on a ſteady Courſe towards Heaven. Nor is it to be imagin'd that ill Uſage from Men will be able to diſcompoſe thoſe, who have put on the ſtrongeſt Reſolutions to be at peace with the whole World, to forgive Injuries as ſoon as received, to pray for their Perſecutors, and to return Good for Evil.

Seeing the holy Religion then, which we profeſs, requires ſuch a peaceable and gentle Diſpoſition of Mind in the croſs Occurrences of this Life, and ſeems upon all Occaſions to diſcountenance any thing that ſavours of Violence, certainly it will never allow of violent Methods in what immediately regards it ſelf. And as theſe are neither ſuitable to the Nature nor Deſign of Religion, ſo it may be ſufficiently ſecur'd without them; and he who queſtions the Truth of this, doth forget that Religion is an inward Principle, fix'd in the Soul, from whence no outward Force is able to remove it. Men may be ſpoil'd of their Goods, depriv'd of their Liberties, and ſuffer conſtant Perſecution for Righteouſneſs-ſake, without hazarding their Religion, which is beyond the Reach of the ſtrongeſt and moſt malicious Enemies. An undeniable Inſtance of this Truth we meet with in the Primitive Martyrs, who, tho they were oftentimes mean and contemptible Perſons, yet they held out againſt the whole Power of the Roman Empire. So that Religion may properly be term'd, A precious Treaſure, of which no man was ever yet rob'd, but by his own Fault; and as we may laugh at any Attempts, which are made againſt it, ſo nothing can be more unreaſonable, than to uſe Violence in keeping what cannot be taken from us. We much undervalue its Power, if we imagine that there is need of any thing

of this kind to ſupport it. Nor can there be a more certain Sign of the Spirit's being weak in us, than our not daring to truſt it without a Guard. In a word, Religion has not throughly inflam'd thoſe Souls, which are not able to offer Sacrifice to God without borrowing ſtrange Fire.

The Precepts of Chriſtianity do not ſeem plainer in any one Thing, than in that unlimited Submiſſion which, as Subjects, we ow to our Prince; and if our Duty to God may ſometimes juſtify our Refuſal to pay an active Obedience, yet in no Caſe are private Perſons at Liberty to reſiſt, but muſt bear patiently the ſharpeſt Tryals, until they can eaſe themſelves in a lawful, that is, in a peaceable way. If the Princes Edicts therefore ſhould appear ſuch as did infringe our deareſt Priviledges, and in our Judgment ſtrike even at Religion it ſelf, we ought ſtill to remember who we are, and what we are concern'd for. We muſt not preſently ſhake off our Allegiance, and imagine that this gives us Authority to diſturb the Publick Peace, or that there is no Rebellion where Religion is the Cauſe we fight for. God doth not call us to put to our Hand after this irreverent manner, to ſupport the tottering Ark; and the Sincerity of our Intentions, or our Zeal for God's Glory and the Goſpel, will not excuſe us in any indirect Courſes. God is jealous of his own Honour, and can eaſily compaſs his Ends, without requiring ſuch things at our hands. The Means he is pleaſed to recommend to us, as fitteſt for this Purpoſe, are our humble Addreſſes to our Soveraign, whom in Conſcience we dare not oppoſe, our making known our juſt Grievances in a dutiful manner, and laying modeſtly before him thoſe Conſiderations, which are moſt likely to remove his Prejudices, and diſpoſe him to entertain a better Opinion of Us and our Principles; and when we have fought with theſe Arms, which Heaven approves of, we muſt back our Petitions with our Prayers to God, that He, who has the hearts of Kings always

ways in his Hands, will incline our Prince to grant our Requeſts, and then, if our Cauſe be truly good, if it be God's as much as we are willing to believe it is, then if we do not ſpoil it in the Management, we need not in the leaſt doubt of a moſt comfortable Iſſue.

But as Things are now order'd, it will be hard to perſuade the World that we are acted by an Evangelical Spirit, where the Practices of many are ſo apparently contrary to the Goſpel. To have our hands ſtill upon our Swords, ready to draw as ſoon as the leaſt Advantage is given us, is a Poſture ill befitting our Profeſſion, and is that which doth inſenſibly deſtroy, but will never maintain Religion. What we would have paſs for pure Zeal, others look upon as Rage, and love of Revenge; and condemn our fomenting Tumults and Inſurrections againſt Authority, as flowing either from a Diffidence of God's Providence, or from a Diſtruſt of his Promiſes, or at beſt from our Impatience to wait his good time. Look back upon the Contrivances of all Rebellions, and you muſt reckon Craft, Ambition, and Hypocriſy have been always among the moſt innocent Inſtruments that are employ'd in hatching and carrying them on; and yet theſe are ſo far from being Acts of Chriſtianity, that all Men who are concern'd to be thought ſtrict in their Morals, will be aſham'd to own them. What then ſhall we ſay to the Falſehood, the Cruelty, the Oppreſſion and Injuſtice which are ſo eminently conſpicuous in the Hiſtory of our late unhappy Rebellion? Certainly for Men to pretend amidſt ſo groſs Enormities, that what they do is to promote God's Service, and to fight his Battels, is a Sin much beyond all the reſt, and brings ſo great a Scandal upon our holy Religion, that we ſee by woful Experience, how it has help'd to ſet up that Spirit of Atheiſm which now abounds among us.

The Arms with which true Religion delights to defend it ſelf,

ſelf, are of a quite different Nature, as Juſtice and Integrity in Mens Dealings, Innocence in their Lives, Zeal without Hypocriſy in their holy Performances; Willingneſs rather to receive the greateſt, than to do the leaſt Injury; Enmity againſt no Perſon, much leſs againſt the Prince; Conſtancy in ſuffering all manner of Inconveniences, rather than to contract Guilt in removing them; and laſtly, a ſincere Abhorrence of offering to ſtain the Chriſtian Religion, by Shedding any Man's Blood in its maintenance, while yet they are reſolv'd by God's Grace patiently to ſacrifice their own Lives, rather than renounce it. Theſe and the like were the innocent Methods which under God prov'd inſtrumental in converting the Heathen World. Chriſtianity, after a new kind of Warfare, became Victorious by yielding; planted, 'tis true, it was and grew up in Blood, yet in ſuch as was not ſpilt in the open Fields, but upon Scaffolds and in Amphitheaters, and always without Reſiſtance. No other Arms than Prayers, Tears, and invincible Patience, made it triumph over the Power of Heathen *Rome*. Holy Leagues, Bonds of mutual Defence, Cabals and ſecret Practices were not known in thoſe Ages. Private Meetings indeed we read of, which far from endangering the Peace of the Empire, prov'd the beſt Seminaries to inſtruct Men in the Principles of Loyalty as well as Religion; Nothing of Sedition was ever heard or taught in thoſe pure, tho Nocturnal Aſſemblies. No man thought fit to meddle with Authority, or arraign the Government there; the time was much better ſpent, even in Exerciſes of Devotion, and in pious Meditations; ſeldom was the Emperors Name there mentioned, except in the Prayers that they daily offer'd up for his Safety, even when the Church groaned under his Perſecution: and for the Truth of what is here alledged, I dare appeal to the Doctrine and Practice of Chriſt, and of the primitive Chriſtians.

If

If we take an exact view of the great Copy Christ has set us, either in his Words or in his Actions, in what he taught, or in what he suffered, every Part doth breath that Peace, which, as a Legacy, he did bequeath his Disciples, (*John* 14. *v.* 27.) Those who are gently and peaceably dispos'd, have no small Share in the Blessings he pronounced in the beginning of his most Divine Sermon, (*Matth.* 5. *v.* 7, 9, 10.) and if we urge his own Words to the contrary, that he came not to send Peace, but a Sword, (*Matth.* 10. *v.* 34.) these shew us rather what he foresaw would be the unhappy Effect, than the real Design of his Coming, which was chiefly to make Peace betwixt God and Man, and to make Men be at Peace with one another; in Order to this he commands us not to resist Evil, (*Math.* 5. *v.* 39.) or the evil Person, as the Learned here observe: and if the Precept be general, the Inference is strongest, with Relation to our Prince, who if he prove evil, unjust or froward, yet of all Persons is least to be resisted. I might bring the most Material Passages of the Gospel, in Confirmation of this necessary Truth. But I shall for brevitie's sake confine my self to two or three Instances.

When the Inhabitants of a Samaritan Village refused to entertain our Saviour, (*Luke* 9. *v.* 54.) two of his Disciples not being able to bear this Affront, ask'd leave to command Fire down from Heaven and consume them, as Elias (2 *Kin.* 1. *v.* 10, 12.) had done, but we find he answer'd them with this sharp rebuke, *Ye know not of what Spirit ye are.* They did imagine it fit for them to imitate the Prophet, forgetting that they were now in the School of Christ, and not in that of *Moses*. Many things were allow'd, but especially to those called Zealots, by which Character *Elias* then acted, which could not take place under this new Dispensation. The Gospel was to be carried on with a Spirit of Lenity and Meekness, Men were to be charm'd and not frighted into a

good Opinion of it. Nor was it at all to be introduced with Violence, or Hazard to their Lives, seeing the Design of the Son of Man's Coming, was not to *destroy Men's Lives, but to save them*, Luke 9. v. 56.

The next Instance shall be that of St. *Peter*, who when the Souldiers came to apprehend Christ, (*Matth. 26. v. 51, 52.*) drew his Sword, and smote a Servant of the High-priest's, and cut off his Ear; but instead of receiving Thanks for his Zeal in his Master's Defence, he was commanded to *put up his Sword*, with this Threat, *That all they who take the Sword, shall perish by the Sword.* Both Ancient and Modern Writers have urged this as a plain Argument against Subjects assuming to themselves the Power of the Sword to oppose Magistrates, or those who act by their Commission, and the Cavil which some make, as if the Threatning were here directed rather to the Jews than to St. *Peter*, will with impartial Persons always pass for a violent wresting the Words from their genuine Sense. An ancient Father (*Theophilact*) doth expresly say that Christ here taught his Disciples not to use the Sword, tho by so doing he might seem to vindicate or defend God himself. Another of the Ancients (*Origen*) doth conclude from Christ's Command to *Peter* to put up his Sword, that we must not draw it unless we will perish by it, and that all those who are not inclin'd to Peace, but are Movers of Sedition, shall perish in the War which they occasion. And to give you the Comment of St. *Austin* here for all; he saith that the Lord did in these Words sufficiently check St. *Peter's* Fact, when he said, 'Put up again thy 'Sword; for he that useth the Sword shall perish by the 'Sword; and he useth it, who, when no Superiour nor Lawful Power doth allow, makes use of Arms against the Blood of another.

It would be too tedious to set down the Words of the most eminent Modern Divines, who agree that *Peter's* Action and

and Christ's Reproof, ought to discourage all private Persons from rising up against Authority, I shall only give the Words of one most learned and judicious Commentator (*Grotius in* 26 *Matth.*) upon this Place, and the rather, because some have falsly challeng'd his Testimony from other of his Writings, to weaken this Evangelical Doctrine of Non-resistance. 'This Admonition, saith he, doth not only belong 'to *Peter*, but indeed to all Christians, whom publick Autho-'rity offers to punish for their Profession. And it is the Will 'of God that we should then give Testimony to all the 'World of our Christian Patience, and commit our Souls 'unto him, as unto a faithful Creator, 1 *Pet.* 2. *v.* 9. For 'what, saith he, can be more just, than for us to lay out 'our Lives for the Honor of him, from whom we had them. 'Nor must the Natural Right of Self-defence be here plead-'ed, for there is great Difference; saith he, in using this 'Right against Robbers, or such like Persons, where we 'have the Law on our side, or against the Commands of 'Authority, which, tho unjust, are to be born with. For, 'as he afterwards observes, Men being apt to be partial in 'what immediately concerns themselves, if once private Per-'sons be allow'd to make violent Opposition, when they 'think they are injur'd by the Magistrate, the World will 'soon be fill'd with Tumults; and the Force of Laws and 'Judicial Procedures will be made void. Reason, therefore 'it self obligeth us to grant some Power which must not be 'resisted; and it is certain, saith he, in Matters of Religion 'the Examples of the primitive Christians do teach us to suf-'fer patiently any Violence offered us by those who are in 'Authority.

Now considering all that might be said in behalf of St. *Peter*, we shall scarce meet with such another Act of Hostility, that may seem so excusable. Justice, Duty, Religion seem'd all to countenance what he did. Violence was here

offer'd to a Person, whom he knew to be most innocent, and in whom no other Fault could be found, than what Malice falsly suggested; and therefore no wonder, if *Peter* thought fit to do what he could, to rescue him. What he did was in Defence of a Master, and one, who besides the common Ties of Duty and Gratitude, which might prompt the Disciple, had deserved likewise well of him, by many special Acts of Love and Tenderness express'd towards him. And lastly, there seem'd to be true Zeal for Religion in this Attempt; for he saw they were going to put the Messias to death, purposely to stifle the great Miracles they had seen him work, to disgrace the heavenly Doctrine which he had taught, and to render the whole Design of his coming into the World ineffectual. Besides, there were other Circumstances to plead for him. As they were no Magistrates who came to seize upon Jesus, so 'tis probable he understood not by what Authority they acted; and tho I shall not with some alledge, that the High-priests Commission under the Roman Government was not sufficient in such Cases, yet 'tis most probable, that *Peter* look'd upon those who came, as the Peoples Emissaries, and their coming to be an Act of their Popular Rage. Lastly, for his Intention in what he did, it clearly appears, to have been only in Defence of Christ's Person, without the least Design of giving any further Disturbance to the Government. And yet notwithstanding all that can be said for him, his Attempt is censur'd by him, whom he intended to serve in it. And that is recorded as a warning for all Christians, to beware of resisting Authority, even when their Actions aim at nothing but the Defence of Christ and the Gospel.

The last and great Instance is Christ's own Carriage at his Tryal, in which he fully answer'd the Character given him by the Prophet, (*Isa.* 53. v. 7.) *He suffered himself to be brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter; as a Sheep before the Shearer,*

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so he opened not his Mouth. He queſtion'd not the Authority of Pilate, he ſummon'd not Legions of Angels to come to his Aſſiſtance, but meekly and humbly ſubmitting to a moſt unjuſt Sentence, he has propoſed himſelf as a Patern to Chriſtians, (1 *Pet.* 2. *v.* 21.) For tho *it behoved Chriſt according to the Scriptures to ſuffer*, yet what was neceſſary both in reſpect of God's Decrees, and for the Benefit of Mankind, muſt be acknowledged voluntary in reſpect of the Sufferer, and ceaſes not to be imitable. If we will be his Diſciples, we muſt trace his glorious Footſteps, take up our Croſs, and like faithful Souldiers follow the Captain of our Salvation, when he calls us. What he requires at our hands is moſt reaſonable, for if we be not able to do great things for his ſake, ſure it is in our Power to command our ſelves from doing Violence to any, to forbear even acting againſt our Perſecutors; and by this means we become Sufferers with him; He approves of no other reſiſtance than what he made himſelf, and what the Scripture (*Heb.* 12. *v.* 4.) mentions of, *reſiſting to Blood.* Chriſt's Followers are only to fight his Battels in the noble Army of the Martyrs. And in this, no doubt, we perform a truer Act of Religion, more acceptable in the Sight of God, more agreeable to Chriſt's Doctrine and Practice, than we are able to do by any other Service whatſoever.

After our bleſſed Saviour's Aſcenſion, the Apoſtles did carefully obſerve the Rules he left them, their Carriage upon all Occaſions was humble, peaceable, and gentle; When they were brought before Magiſtrates and Governours, they treated them with reſpect, but did never call their Authority in queſtion, nor upbraided them with Cruelty and Injuſtice, as we too frequently hear done in our chiefeſt Judicatures. St. *Paul* (*Acts* 23.) having ſpoken irreverently to the High-prieſt, who unjuſtly commanded him to be ſmitten, while a Priſoner at the Bar, before Trial or Sentence,

thought it his Duty to make an Apology, declaring that he knew not the Quality of him before whom he ſtood, and that Men were *not to ſpeak evil of the Ruler of the People.* He ſtood indeed upon his Privilege, and appealed from an inferiour Magiſtrate unto *Cæſar*, (*Acts* 25.) but in this he owned the higher Powers, which ſome among us have learned to reject, he pleaded not any Exemption by virtue of his Apoſtleſhip, tho he could not reaſonably expect much Favour, where a *Nero* was to be his Judge. His Doctrine of Obedience and Submiſſion is no leſs remarkable than his Practice; ſo that if there were not one Word in the Writings of all the Apoſtles to this Purpoſe, beſides what St. *Paul* has in the firſt ſeven Verſes of the thirteenth Chapter to the *Romans*, we might there be ſufficiently inſtructed in the Duty of Subjects: his Poſitions are ſo plain, and the Arguments, by which he enforces them, are ſo convincing, that had he lived in our times, and heard all the Objections which are raiſed againſt the Doctrine of Submiſſion, he could not have anſwered them more clearly, nor in fewer Words; and no doubt the Spirit of God, which did dictate what He, and St. *Peter*, and St. *Jude* did write upon this Subject, had an Eye to the Degeneracy of latter Ages, and deſign'd to lay ſuch ſure Grounds of Chriſtian Obedience, as the Wiſdom of the World ſhould never be able to ſhake in thoſe, who are reſolved to regulate their Lives by the Scripture.

Nor doth it add a little to the Weight of their Teſtimony, when we conſider the Circumſtances under which they then were, had the World in thoſe Days been govern'd by Chriſtian Princes, who ſubmitting their Sceptres to the Croſs, had gloried in ſhewing themſelves nurſing Fathers to the Goſpel in its Infancy, their Doctrine might then have ſeem'd ſuitable to the Temper of thoſe they had to deal with; nor could they have allow'd too much to Princes, who were like to uſe their Power for the Eſtabliſhment of the Chriſtian

ſtian Religion. Or had their Princes, tho Heathens, been *Nerva's*, *Antonius's*, or *Aurelius's*, Perſons remarkable for their Juſtice and Clemency, there would have been no great Inconvenience in this Doctrine, but their preaching up Submiſſion to ſuch Monſters as *Claudius*, or *Nero*, under whoſe Cruelties the Roman Empire then groan'd, doth clearly demonſtrate, that they were not govern'd by Political Maximes, nor biaſs'd by any Worldly Conſideration. But on the contrary, that they laid down general and inviolable Rules, to be obſerved at all Times, and towards all Princes, the froward as well as the gentle; thoſe who did unjuſtly perſecute them, as well as others that vouchſafed them Protection.

And certainly in this, and in no other Senſe, did the Primitive Chriſtians underſtand the Apoſtle's Words, and were therefore of all Subjects the moſt dutiful to the very worſt of Princes; no Barbarous Uſage, no Oppreſſion could make them ſwerve from their firſt Principle of patient Submiſſion; they had always before their Eyes the Pattern of their bleſſed Saviour, in every Step of his Humiliation and Sufferings; nor did they forget what he had taught them, (*John 18. v. 36.*) *That his Kingdom was not of this World*; and that they, being his Servants, were not therefore to fight; they knew he intended no Prejudice to the Rights of Princes, in ſetting up his Monarchy, which is ſpiritual and Eternal. And this puts me in mind of a remarkable Paſſage in a Fragment of *Egeſippus*, a moſt ancient Chriſtian Writer, how *Domitian*, like another *Herod*, being jealous of Chriſt's return to dethrone him, raiſed an heavy Perſecution againſt the Church, giving particular Order, that ſuch as were of the Seed of *David*, ſhould be forthwith ſecur'd; whereupon ſome, that were related to Chriſt according to the Fleſh, being brought before him, and examin'd firſt concerning their own Condition, which they eaſily made appear

pear to be mean and low; and afterwards concerning the Nature of Christ's Kingdom, they shewed so plainly, that it was not of this World, but commenced properly, when others ended, being Spiritual and Eternal, that having satisfied the Emperour, and freed him from any Apprehension of Christ's Design upon his Crown, they themselves were set at Liberty, and a stop was immediately put to the Persecution.

The Behaviour of the Christians, in those golden Ages of the Church, never gave any just ground of Jealousy to the Roman Emperours, in all the Vicissitudes of that Empire, in the frequent Rebellions against the Government, or Conspiracies against the Emperour's Person; the Christians kept constant to their Allegiance. When by siding with such Usurpers as *Cassius*, *Albinus*, *Niger*, *Parthenius*, &c. they might not only have freed themselves from bloody Yokes, but have also in all probability made sure of large Immunities, they could never be wrought on to take Arms against the establish'd Authority; they were perswaded, how ill soever the Emperours might manage their Trust, yet that their Commission was seal'd by God. Nay sometimes the Christians brought upon themselves Persecution, by refusing to join with Rebels; as in the Reign of *Adrian*, when *Barachebas* and the Jews, not being able upon their Revolt to engage the Christians in their Party, turn'd the Edge of their Sword against the Church, killing most barbarously all the Christians that they met with, and made them thus Martyrs, for the next best cause after Religion, if it is not to be called a Part of it.

Now without doubt the many Edicts which Emperours past in Favor of the Christians, were grounded chiefly upon such Considerations, seeing upon strict Enquiry they had never found them engag'd in any Plots against the State; and 'tis particularly observ'd of *Severus*, that the Kindness, he

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shew'd to the Christians in the beginning of his Reign, proceeded from a sense of their dutiful Carriage in difficult Times, both towards himself, and the former Emperours. In fine, the most inveterate Enemies of their Religion could not deny them this Testimony, That in the sharpest Persecutions, when they were only suffered to live, to prolong their Torments, when a simple Death, not accompanied with those horrid Cruelties, which were then practised, past for no small Favour; When the Streets were filled with the Carcasses of Martyrs, and the Rivers dy'd with the most precious Blood of the Church, they could never be tempted to rebel. Nor was there truly any thing, in which their Enemies did more industriously labour, than through Despair to draw them into Rebellion, that so they might have had the better Excuse to cut them off. It grieved the Roman Emperours to employ their Axes and not their Swords, and to give their Executioners so much Work, while their Legions were idle, and spill so much Blood with so little Reputation: but Christians knew their Duty too well, to give them any Advantage in this Point; for the Renouncing their Religion, or their Alledgiance were the only Things, wherein they could never be brought to gratify their Princes.

It were easy to bring many Instances in Confirmation of what I say, but I shall only pitch upon that famous History of the *Thebean* Legion, which tho commonly known, yet can never be either too much admired, nor too often repeated: All the Officers and Souldiers of this noble Legion having been converted to Christianity by *Zambdas* Bishop of Jerusalem, during their Winter-Quarters in those Parts, were in the heat of the *Diocletian* Persecution sent from the East, to reinforce the Army of *Maximianus Herculeus* in *France*, and understanding upon their Arrival in the Imperial Camp, that a new Military Oath was to be given them at an Heathen

Altar, purposely to pollute them with Idolatry, the whole Legion did thereupon retire from the rest of the Army: when *Maximianus* commanded them back, *Maurit ius* and *Exuperius*, the Chief Officers answer'd in the name of all, that they were ready to return and fight against his Enemies, but being Christians, they could not offer Sacrifice to the Gods. This Answer did so enrage the Emperour, that he sentenced every tenth Man of the Legion to be put to death, which was accordingly done; none offering to make the least Resistance; and when the same cruel Orders were renew'd, *Mauritius* had so prepar'd them by Applauding their former Behaviour, that they all answer'd, They were *Cæsar's* Souldiers, that they had never brought upon themselves the imputation of Cowardise, nor deserted their Colours; that they were ready to obey the Emperour in every Thing, but in offering Sacrifice to Idols; and that their Bodies he might dispose of as he pleased, only their Souls they reserved to Christ: then *Exuperius* confirming them in their generous Resolution, said, That they did now engage in a new War, and that they must not think to fight their Way to Heaven with their Swords; Tell the Emperour, says he, that Despair it self shall not be able to engage us against him, we 'have Arms, but we will not resist, because we are willing rather to suffer, than conquer; preferring much an 'innocent Death, before a Life stain'd with Guilt. And afterwards making good their own and their Officers Words, in Imitation of their blessed Master, they suffer'd themselves to be led as Sheep to the Slaughter, and received every one a glorious Crown of Martyrdom.

If we compare the meek and Christian Behaviour of these stout Officers and Souldiers, with that of our greatest Professors, we have reason to bewail the Age in which we live, as scarce retaining any Tincture of this primitive Spirit. What excuse can we bring for Men, who pretending to em-

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brace the sacred Function of the Ministry, and to preach the Gospel of Peace, have thought fit to appear in Arms, surrounded with Troops in opposition to Christian Authority, when we find the Officers and Souldiers of a Legion here throw down their Arms, rather than oppose an Heathen Persecutor? What could Mr. *Welsch*, or the Captain of his Guard, have alledged in their own behalf, had they heard *Maximus* upon the Head of his Legion rejoicing at the patient suffering of those, who died in the first Declination, and Exhorting them that surviv'd to follow their Example, and not to dishonour their Profession, with the Guilt of Rebellion? How much more Christian was the Death of *Exuperius*, who stript himself of his Arms, as soon as the Emperours Commission was produced, than that of Mr. *Cameron*, who died with a Sword in his Hand, resisting his Prince? I dare not say that Mr. *Cameron* and this noble Officer seem'd to act each others part, seeing *Exuperius* truly perform'd his own, and hath deserved to be celebrated by all Posterity, for a Christian *Hero*. But I hope M. *Cameron's* greatest Friends will not be offended with me, if I declare that in my humble Opinion, the Manner of his Death did give no great Lustre to his former Actions; for whatever Reputation it may be to a Man fighting against Turks and Infidels in Defence of Christianity, to be said to have sold his Life at a dear Rate, yet in giving the Character of a faithful Minister of Christ, I cannot think it much for his Honour to mention that he died, as we know M. *Cameron* did, boldly fighting in direct Opposition to Authority.

I am not ignorant how uncharitable some have been, in affirming that the Submission pay'd by the ancient Christians, flow'd chiefly from their want of Power, and that they did not oppose their *Domitians* nor their *Diocletians*, because they were not in a Condition to carry on a Rebellion: but 'tis a most malicious as well as a false Suggestion, only to sul-

ly the Glory of their Sufferings, and to deprive many Martyrs of one of the most precious Jewels in their Crown, by making that Submission forced, which was most voluntary. This is directly to tax those sincere Christians with Disingenuity, as if they had pretended Conscience, for what proceeded chiefly from Fear or Weakness; while indeed the Principles of their Religion made them good Subjects, and taught them to be more afraid of the Guilt than the Punishment of Rebels. Those that were known to pray every Day, for a long Life, and a peaceable Reign to their Emperours, could not be supposed to harbour the least Thoughts of giving them Disturbance, and had their Inclinations been at all mutinous, by joining with a disaffected Party, which could never be wanting in so great a Body, it was in the Christians Power at any time to have shaken the Empire. This we may learn from *Tertullian*, who boasts much of their Numbers in his excellent Apology. Those who by deserting their Country must have depopulated it, might certainly by fighting have broken the Government. In Cities where there were two Christians to one Heathen, as in many then in *Asia*, they needed not have suffer'd themselves to be so cruelly butcher'd, had not their Consciences disarm'd them of all Weapons of Defence against the Emperour. The same we may gather from St. *Cyprian*, in that Discourse of his address'd to *Demetrianus*, where he fairly lays down the Grounds upon which Christians then walked. But granting there had been five Heathens to one Christian, yet, as *Tertullian* observes, Christians readiness to sacrifice their Lives might have made up their Disproportion in Number, had not their Religion obliged them rather to dy, than by Drawing their Swords to kill others. And sure if the Christians were considerable so early, as in *Tertullian*'s and St. *Cyprian*'s time, no Question in the latter, and of the third, and the beginning of the fourth Century they wanted not Strength to defend

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themſelves againſt the Violences then offer'd them under *Diocleſian* and his Colleagues, had their Religion given them leave to reſiſt.

I cannot finiſh this Diſcourſe, without obſerving that many finding violent Practices in Matters of Religion, utterly condemned by the Examples of Chriſt, of his Apoſtles, and of the primitive Chriſtians, retire to the old Teſtament, as more favourable to their Deſign: but they never conſider that, as many Actions are there rather recorded than commended, and which are not to be imitated, tho there be no Cenſure annext to the Relations there delivered; ſo ſeveral Things were Lawful under that Diſpenſation, which the Goſpel cannot admit. The Government inſtituted by *Moſes* was a Theocracy; where, beſides the eſtabliſh'd Laws, God did by immediate Inſpiration give Commiſſion to private Perſons, to turn Magiſtrates, and to puniſh offenders, without tying them to any formal Procedure; ſuch was *Phineas*, (*Numb.* 25.) and after him the Zealots, whoſe Actions were accounted moſt Heroical among the Jews. Yet when Chriſt's Diſciples would have aſſumed this Priviledge in Imitation of *Elias*, they met with a Check, as I have already obſerv'd, from their Maſter: And if, according to the Opinion of ſome learned Men, *Peter's* Action was of this kind, we have ſtill a further Teſtimony of Chriſt's Diſcountenancing ſuch Methods, as too violent for the meek Spirit of the Goſpel. And tho the Actions of *Phineas*, of *Elias*, and of other Prophets, while immediately directed by God, were laudable; yet afterwards, when their Zealots were acted by heat of Paſſion, and private Reſentment, more than by Divine Inſpiration; to what Exceſs of Cruelty and Injuſtice did they riſe! Fury and Rage under a Cloak of Zeal pretended to an Authority to commit the worſt of Actions. And *Joſephus* informs us, how thoſe, that went under the Name of Zealots then, were the chief Inſtruments in the

Ruin of the Jewish Nation, and in the Destruction of *Jerusalem*.

Now as no Religion nor Government could be safe under this latter Sort of Zealots; so the former were never design'd as Paterns for Christians, who have settled Rules to walk by; who expect no other Revelations than the Oracles of God, contain'd in the holy Scripture; and must therefore condemn those that in our Days pretend to new Lights, and extraordinary Commissions, to curb Magistrates and reform Governments, as seduced by a Spirit of Enthusiasm, savouring more of Anti-Christ than of the blessed Author of our Religion. But tho we should allow Men were still at liberty, to imitate those holy Zealots, the publick Peace will not be much endanger'd by their Example; for by what can be gather'd from most of their Actions, they were rather terrible Neighbours to notorious Transgressors of the Law, than undutiful Subjects to wicked Princes; they had only Permission to do Justice upon meaner Offenders, but as for the Sins of their Kings, these were reserved Cases, of such God himself thought fit to be the immediate Avenger, or at least to ty Subjects up from medling with them, until they had his particular Commission, which was never granted against their Prince, till God, by the Authority he reserv'd to himself in that Government, had first degraded him. In a Word, let us consult the Jewish Annals, and see, if we can bring any good Authority thence, for rising up in Arms against Magistrates, upon the account of Religion; or whether any of the Instances, that are alledged to this Purpose, be first in themselves justifiable; and next, If they be clear evidences in a Matter of so great Importance: for where the Question is, If Subjects are to obey or resist, the Proofs for Resistance ought to be as plain, as those for Obedience, before they venture to act; and this I presume will hardly be made appear from Scripture.

When

When *Jeroboam* placed his Calves in *Dan* and *Bethel*, and *made Iſrael ſin*; we find the Prophets condemn his Idolatry, and foretell the ruin of his Houſe, (1 *Kings* 13. *v.* 14.) but they ſtirr'd not up his Subjects to Rebellion againſt him. *Elias*, as a Prophet, took upon him to reprove *Ahab*; but, as a Zealot, he gave him no further Diſturbance in his Government. Againſt all the wicked Kings of *Iſrael* and *Judah*, who were enemies to the pure Religion and Worſhip, which God had eſtabliſhed, the Prophets boldly denounced the Wrath of God, but ſeldom help'd to execute it; tho under the harſheſt Treatment, when they were hid by fifties in a Cave, they never employ'd their Popularity to raiſe Sedition, or to involve their Countrey in a Civil War, either in their own Defence, or in that of their Religion. When from Idolatrous they fell under the Yoke of Heathen Princes and Strangers; they preached up Duty and Allegiance to ſuch, being perſuaded, that theſe alſo derived their Power from God. And tho the *Maccabees* in oppoſing *Antiochus* are commended, as the Reſtorers of the ancient Worſhip, and of the Liberties of their Countrey; yet I conceive it may be prov'd, that he was an Uſurper, and had no juſt Title to *Judea*, and that the Jewiſh Nation had never, by any Legal Act, own'd him for their Prince.

If notwithſtanding all that has been ſaid, any among us ſhould ſtill inſiſt upon ſome Actions of the Zealots; which give countenance to Reſiſtance, as that of *Elias*, in calling down Fire from Heaven, to deſtroy the King's Commiſſionate Officers, I ſhall only anſwer, that they alſo may be allow'd to reſiſt, when Heaven appears as viſibly in their behalf, as it did here in the Prophet's. The World is uncharitable enough to believe, that our Zealots would ſhew ſome Inſtances of their Severity, had they the ſame Power with *Elias*, to command Fire from Heaven; and that the King's Troops, that have at any time march'd againſt them, had

then

then died without Mercy, after the ſame terrible Manner, that King *Ahaziah*'s did, which were ſent againſt the Prophet. But hitherto thoſe, that have appear'd in Arms againſt the King, have been ſo far from giving any evidence of God's Fighting for them, or authorizing their Proceedings by Miracles, that he rather has ſeem'd to diſown them, by caſting a Damp upon their Spirits, when they ſtood moſt in need of ſome extraordinary Aſſiſtance; I appeal to thoſe, who were at any of thoſe unhappy Engagements againſt their Prince, whether they did not find that Heat and Flame, which upon other Occaſions they were able to expreſs, ſuddenly quencht, when they were juſt about to act? have not ſome of their Teachers upbraided them in the Pſalmiſt's Words, that like the Children of Ephraim (*Pſal.* 78. *v.* 9.) *Being armed, and carrying Bows, they turn'd back in the Day of Battel?* Have not the Troops, that were ſent againſt them, confeſs'd, they could not much glory in their Victories, becauſe they were ſo eaſily obtain'd? To be plain, I am afraid, we are become equally the Object of the World's Contempt, and of its Hatred; our late Behaviour having brought upon us the Imputation of Cowardiſe as well as Diſloyalty.

Third Conſideration.

If the Perſons, for whom I undertook this Argument, think fit to reade what has been ſaid upon the firſt two Points, I hope they will not give over here, but will vouchſafe to conſider with me, in the third place, whether any Obligation, lying upon us from the late Covenants, be a ſufficient Warrant for what we do. Now the beſt Method I can propoſe in this, is to give a brief Account of the Riſe and Progreſs of both Covenants, with ſome impartial Reflexions upon them; in which if my Reader will not reſt ſatisfied, he

ſhall

ſhall have no occaſion at leaſt given him to think me tedious.

Our late Soveraign being fully perſuaded that no Church did approach ſo near the Primitive Purity in Worſhip and Diſcipline, as that of *England*, was reſolved to make his Native-Countrey ſhare in what he judg'd ſo great a Bleſſing; and in order to it had a Liturgy, and a Book of Canons, publiſhed for the uſe of *Scotland*; where he was unhappily made believe, he ſhould meet with Approbation from the better ſort, and with Complyance from all. But the Peoples inſolent and mutinous Behaviour, in affronting and diſturbing the Perſons who were ordered to read the Service in the Churches of *Edenburgh*, did ſhew how ill they were diſpoſed to receive it. This Popular Tumult the firſt Sunday, was ſoon after back'd with Petitions and other Marks of their Diſlike, which obliged the Council to advance ſlowly, until they gave the Court advice of what had paſt. And before the King could come to a Reſolution in a Buſineſs of ſo great Importance, ſuch as were no Friends to the Government, not only ventur'd to publiſh their Diſſatisfaction, and to enflame the Kingdom with ſtrange Jealouſies of Popery and Arbitrary Power, but likewiſe formed themſelves into ſeveral Tables (as they called them) of Noblemen, Gentlemen, Miniſters, and Citizens, and by a new Authority took upon them, to ſum up all the Grievances which they intended ſhould be redreſſed; and tho his Majeſties not urging the Liturgy upon that Kingdom, when he ſaw it could not be done in a peaceable way, might have quieted all their Minds, yet finding their Party ſtrong beyond Expectation, they were loth to let ſlip ſo favourable a Juncture, but boldly reſolved to ſecure themſelves againſt all Attempts of this kind, by entering into a National Covenant, in which they pretended only to renew that, which had been ſworn in the Reign of King *James*.

Thoſe who adhered to the King's intereſt, could by no means allow of this manner of proceeding, which appeared equally diſingenuous and undutiful. The diſcontented Party alledged in their own behalf, the Preſident given them in the late Reign, which the others thought did no ways favour their Cauſe, ſeeing the Covenant then taken was ſtampt with Royal Authority, whereas theirs now ſeem'd directly oppoſite to it; for there could not be the leaſt Pretence to the King's conſent, which they never ſo much as deſired. 'Tis true, it was upon the humble Motion of a general Aſſembly, that the former King's Council had order'd the National Covenant to be taken the laſt time, with a Bond to maintain the true Religion, and the King's Perſon. But this inſtance of the General Aſſemblies Motion, which they laid hold on, was ſo far from juſtifying, that it rather condemned their Proceedings; in regard that the General Aſſemblies not enjoyning the Covenant, till they had firſt obtained his Majeſties Conſent, made it evident that in the Aſſemblies Judgment the Oath could not be renewed without that Authority which firſt impoſed it; Nor could they expect any Sanctuary from the Acts of Parliament, for it had been declared by more than one, that all who leagu'd themſelves together, without the knowledg of their Soveraign, were to be puniſhed as Movers of Sedition, and Diſturbers of the Publick Peace.

Beſides their want of Authority, they laid themſelves open to another moſt dangerous Cenſure, while under colour of copying a Covenant and Bond allowed of in the late Reign, it plainly appear'd they had not taken their meaſures by that Standard, but had explain'd many things rather according to their own, than King *James's*, Mind, and had alſo added ſeveral new Articles of moſt pernicious conſequence, both to the King's Perſon, and the eſtabliſh'd Government. The King's Perſon was endanger'd, in ſo far, as

by

by their new Bond they enter'd into a mutual Defence of one another, againſt all Perſons whatſoever, without excepting his Majeſty. This the Royal Party ſaid was in Effect to declare, that if he offer'd to thwart them, they muſt then oppoſe him, by adhering to their Covenant. Nor were they more favourable to the eſtabliſhed Government, in which they made a wide Breach, by taking upon them to cancel all the Acts of Parliament, and of General Aſſemblies, that authorized the high Commiſſion, the five Articles of *Perth*, or the ſitting of Biſhops in Judicatures. Now by theſe and ſeveral other Inſtances of this kind, it ſeem'd ſtrange with what face they could make their Covenant and Bond paſs for the ſame with the former Kings, ſeeing it was not to be preſum'd that the Father deſign'd to leſſen either his own or his Son's Authority; Nor to teach his Subjects how to combine without being Rebels; nor yet to favour the extirpating the Articles of *Perth*, and other Things after his Death, which in his Life he had ſo induſtriouſly promoted.

Whatever Influence theſe Pretences might have upon undiſcerning People, or ſuch, as gave an implicite Credit to whatever their Paſtors taught them, the World abroad had much different Thoughts. Nor could all the Endeavours that were uſed to win many of the Reformed Religion in *France*, to a good Opinion of ſuch Courſes; for they having long inveighed againſt that wicked Aſſociation at home, call'd the *Holy League*, found their Mouths now ſtop'd, when the Proteſtants, contrary to the Principles of our Religion, did exactly follow ſo ill a Pattern, ſet them by Papiſts. Beſides, they knew not what to think of Men, who, ſetting up for ſome further degrees in Reformation, thought fit to communicate their Counſels with Cardinal *Richelieu*, whom they in *France* look'd upon as the moſt dangerous Enemy then alive to the Proteſtant Intereſt; and indeed how that Cardinal's Creature, a bigotiſh Fryar, whom he em-

ploy'd at that time in *Scotland*, could go along in their Counſels, and be ſo much in the Confidence of Men, that pretended to root out all the Seeds of Popery, is a Thing yet unaccountable; and the more to alienate Peoples Hearts from the new Liturgy, they did maliciouſly give out, that it was forg'd at *Rome*, and approv'd of by the Pope. Yet the King's Friends might have defied them, to ſhew ſo much of Popiſh Counſel in the framing or introducing that miſtaken Book, as did appear in the Methods they made uſe of to oppoſe it.

The King perceiving how ſucceſsfully they carried on their Deſigns, and gain'd many of his Subjects to their Party, by frighting them with Popery and Arbitrary Power, diſpatch'd the Marqueſs of *Hamilton* into *Scotland*, in Quality of Commiſſioner, with Order, to iſſue out a Declaration, containing all the Aſſurances which could be deſired of his Majeſty's firmneſs to the Proteſtant Religion, together with his Engagement upon his Royal Word not to enjoin the Liturgy, nor think of any Innovation, unleſs in ſuch a fair and legal way, as none could reaſonably except againſt. Whereupon thoſe of the other Party, being apprehenſive leſt this might remove moſt of the Peoples Prejudices againſt the Government, uſed their utmoſt Endeavours to hinder the Marqueſs from publiſhing the King's Declaration; and when this could no longer be done, got time enough to form a moſt bold Proteſtation, by which they labour'd to evade all that was alledged againſt them, and to juſtify their whole Conduct, declaring roundly, towards the Concluſion, That if his Majeſty did not allow of their Proceedings, they were reſolv'd of themſelves to call a General Aſſembly, which would be more favourable to them.

The King's Declaration being thus in a great Meaſure rendred ineffectual, and their Obſtinacy, in adhering to the Covenant, growing ſtill greater, a way was thought on how

how Things might be accommodated, without great Prejudice to the Crown, and the Covenant be rendred tolerable; The Royal Party therefore propoſed, that in the Bond of mutual Defence againſt all Perſons whatſoever, the Covenanters, who ſtood ſo much upon their Loyal Intentions, would vindicate them to the World, by excepting his Majeſty, and declaring, that in their Bond they never deſign'd any Oppoſition to his Authority. But this moſt reaſonable Demand, the Heads of that Party could by no means be brought to grant; and no wonder, if their rejecting ſo fair and ſo eaſy a Propoſal, gave thoſe, who were Enemies to their Covenant, occaſion to complain, that their Practice now began to diſcover it ſelf inconſiſtent with what they at firſt pretended; for whereas in the Covenant they declared from their Heart before God and Man, that they had no intention, nor deſire to attempt any Thing, which might turn to the diminution of the King's Greatneſs and Authority; it ſeem'd hard now to reconcile this and other ſuch Expreſſions, with their Threatning, to aſſume the King's undoubted Prerogative, in calling an Aſſembly, and with their refuſing to give the King the Satisfaction of excepting him in their mutual Bond, even when by his Commiſſioner he ſo earneſtly deſired it.

There remain'd yet one expedient for the King to ruin all they had done, and this was to renew his Father's Covenant; and by this means for ever to defeat their malicious Suggeſtions of his Inclinations to Popery, which was there ſo plainly renounced, or at leaſt to make the whole World ſee, how diſingenuous they were, if they offer'd to oppoſe that Covenant, which from the Beginning they pretended to have ſworn. His Majeſty, accepting of this Motion, was pleaſed to give his Commiſſioner Authority, that at the ſame time, he recommended the Covenant, he ſhould abſolutely revoke the Liturgy, the Book of Canons, and the

high Commiſſion, forbid the Practice of the five Articles of *Perth*, after a general Pardon to ſuch of his Subjects, as having been miſled, were willing to return to their Allegiance; and laſtly, that for examining all their juſt Grievances, he ſhould declare his Majeſty's gracious intentions to call a General Aſſembly and a Parliament, where neither Biſhops nor others were to be exempted from Cenſure, but proceeded againſt in a due and legal Form according to their Miſdemeanors.

Upon the news of the King's Covenant, which came thus accompanied with ſo many and ſo large Expreſſions of Kindneſs, and with ſuch undeniable Marks of his gracious Inclinations to purchaſe his Subjects Affections at any rate, ſome who before deſpair'd of a good Iſſue, and others, who began to ſhake in their Allegiance, were again confirmed, nothing doubting, but that the Way to heal the dangerous Breach was now found out, and that the Jealouſies of Popery and Innovation being ſufficiently remov'd, all Parties would henceforth concur in expreſſing their Duty to his Majeſty. But it proved much otherwiſe with thoſe, who were deeply engaged in the Covenant, whom no Indulgence could ſweeten, nor Conceſſion ſatisfy, with Contempt did they reject the proffer of Pardon, becauſe accepting thereof might have perhapsargued Guilt, and a tacite yielding the Point, when they were reſolved to inſiſt upon the Merits of their Cauſe; the King's Covenant, which had been ſo dear to the Nation in the former Reign, and under the ſhadow of which their new Covenant had firſt taken Root, was now cryed down as an helliſh Contrivance to deſtroy Religion, and the Power of Godlineſs, and all that ſubſcribed it, were declared perjur'd, tho they had made their own hitherto paſs with the common People for the ſame; to be ſhort, all being now at ſtake, and they like to be ruined by their own Arts, it was high time to pull off the Mask.

Finding

Finding then that they could no longer pretend the late King's Authority, they fled to a greater, proteſting their Adherence to the new Covenant, as immediately ſealed from Heaven. Had they been able to give any Evidence for that Seal, no wonder if they ſtill made good their Party; but when their prevaricating was already ſo plain, People were extreamly credulous to reſt ſatisfied in this upon their bare Word. I ſhall only adventure to ſay, it was no Argument of their having the Seal of God, becauſe they wanted that of his Vice-gerent; which was indeed a ſtrong Preſumption againſt them, and queſtionleſs the moſt zealous Eſpouſers of that Intereſt, whatever Aſſurances they ſeemed to have of God's approving what they then did, will be ſo ingenuous as to own it a Thing of dangerous Conſequence, for all eſtabliſhed Governments to give Encouragement to Pretences of this Nature, ſeeing at this rate all, who deſign to impoſe upon the World, may eaſily feign a Warrant from God, and ſo ſet up in Oppoſition to Authority.

That very Reſolution of adhering to their Covenant, which made them fiercely oppoſe the King's, and reject his Act of Grace, prompted them to join with his Motion for a General Aſſembly, becauſe from thence they were ſure to draw ſome Advantage; and tho the King might juſtly have refuſed to make good his Proffers, when they had ſo undutifully rejected the greateſt Part of them; yet being willing to gratify his Subjects in every Thing, the Commiſſioner had Order to appoint the Time and Place. No ſooner were they ſure of an Aſſembly (*at Glaſgow, the 21ſt of November*, 1638.) but Engines were ſet on work to diſpoſe Things for the Advancement of the Cauſe: The Marqueſs of *Hamilton* being to preſide there for his Majeſty, propoſed ſome Preliminaries to regulate Elections, and to prevent ſuch Diſorders and Diſputes, as were like to ariſe, if they obſerved not one and the ſame Method every where; theſe the Tables would

would not hear of, alledging that nothing of this kind could be done, without encroaching upon the Liberties of Christ and of his Church. While at the same Time that the King's Commissioners Preliminaries were rejected, they themselves durst adventure to agree upon eight Articles or Directions to Presbyteries, wherein they determin'd the Members that were to be chosen, the Matters that were to be handled, and the Manner they were to proceed in the Assembly, in every one of which all indifferent Persons thought the Tables guilty of a more open Encroachment upon Christ and the Liberties of his Church, than could be charg'd upon the Marquess, for his modest and reasonable Proposals.

Amongst other unwarrantable Methods, none was more remarkable than their directing Lay-elders from every Parish, to be present at the several Presbyteries, to vote in the Election of Members for the Assembly; Nor could these ruling Elders fail to carry the Elections as they pleased, if we consider, that six Ministers being declared Candidates in every Presbytery, were obliged to retire, as having no Vote in choosing or rejecting themselves, and then the remaining Ministers being lessen'd after this Manner in Number, were plainly out-voted everywhere by the Elders. Surely this was the first Time that ever Secular Men had the naming an Ecclesiastical Assembly; nor needed they have questioned the Success, where the Business was to be manag'd by no other than their own Creatures; yet contrary to the Practice of former Assemblies in *Scotland*, contrary to the Practice of all Churches and Ages, they took upon them to go and sit Members themselves in the Assembly, not only to advise in Matters of Discipline, for which they might perhaps have brought a President, but also to decide controverted Points in Divinity, for which, to say no worse, many of them were very ill qualified by their Education. And now let the whole World judge if it were not an Act of Partiality,

not

not to be paralell'd, for them to cry out upon Biſhops and Clergy-men's medling in Secular Affairs, and do now raiſe ſuch an outcry againſt the King's Supremacy, pretending that it is inconſiſtent with the Nature of Spiritual Things, to bring them under the Government of the Secular Power: When they themſelves, who were Secular Perſons, did ſo manifeſtly invade the moſt undoubted Prerogative of the Miniſtry, heavy Complaints were given in, of the inſupportable Yoke of Prelacy: but in truth that of Secular Men, lording it then over God's Inheritance, was much more grievous than the former. Nor were the wiſer Sort of Miniſters among them inſenſible of this Uſurpation, only they were aſham'd to complain much of the Uneaſineſs of thoſe Chains, wherewith they had help'd to fetter themſelves.

If the brevity, which I propoſe, would allow me, it might be ſuitable enough with my Deſign, to give a full Account of what paſt in that memorable Aſſembly, and ſhew how they confirm'd the Covenant there by the ſame Methods, by which it was at firſt ſet on foot, and had hitherto been carried on. But it is ſufficient at preſent to obſerve, that the certain Proſpect of a fatal Iſſue, both to King and Government, if not timely prevented, obliged the King's Commiſſioner to diſſolve the Aſſembly within a few Days after their Meeting. And when he expected Compliance, he found them ready with a Proteſtation to continue their Seſſions, till ſuch Time as they had finiſhed the glorious Work for which they met; however, their refuſing to obey the King's Commands, ſignified to them by his Commiſſioner, was perfectly inconſiſtent with what the moſt eminent among them had ſaid, ſome days before at the opening the Aſſembly; for then they expreſt in ſeveral Harangues their Senſe of the King's Bounty and Tenderneſs in bringing them thither: and who can deny but he, who only had Authority to call them, could alſo diſſolve them at Pleaſure? and tho both are equal-

by Royal Prerogatives, yet undoubtedly our Princes have Reason to set the highest Value upon their Power of Dissolving, which has been useful to them upon many Occasions; nor did ever the Crown receive so deep a Wound, as when our late Soveraign parted with this choice Prerogative, and so lay at the Mercy of a Parliament, which the Fears of Dissolution could only have bridled, and kept them within some Compass. But to return to the Assembly: When so great a Contempt was put upon the King, they went on in a most violent and illegal Manner, to excommunicate some of the Bishops, and to depose all the rest; many Acts of Parliament were rescinded, the Determinations of forty Years Assemblies were declared void; all Persons were enjoin'd to take the Covenant under pain of Excommunication; and to give the World a lasting Instance of their Modesty, they concluded with a Letter to his Majesty, justifying their whole Procedure, and entreating him, that he would look upon them as good and dutiful Subjects, and be satisfied with what they had done.

No wonder if Provocations of so high a Nature did beget suitable Resentments in the King, who after so much abus'd Indulgence, had no Way left to maintain his Right but by Arms; nor did the Covenanters decline a Breach, having made early Preparation for it; so that, before the King came to any Act of Hostility, they seized upon his Castles, levied Troops, impos'd Taxes, and cast off all manner of Allegiance; and even when his Majestie's Aversion from shedding his Subjects Blood, made him, upon the Head of a brave and numerous Army, yield to terms of as great Condescension as Necessity could have extorted, and send them home gratified in all their Demands, without fighting; yet new Grievances arm'd them again; and whereas at first they stop'd on the Borders, now most boldly they march into *England*, force their Passage at *Newburn*, and refuse to return, until

til the King agreed to come into *Scotland*, there to paſs all his Conceſſions into Acts of Parliament.

His Majeſty failed not to make good what he promiſed, and having purchas'd their Allegiance at ſo dear a rate, might juſtly have challeng'd their entire Obedience upon the Principles of Gratitude, as well as Duty; but upon the woful Rupture, which ſoon after followed, betwixt him and his Engliſh Parliament, the Spirit and Temper of our Covenanters did diſcover it ſelf more than ever. Far from being ſatisfied with the great Trouble they had occaſion'd at home, or with the Settlement procur'd to their Hearts Deſire, they cheriſh the two Houſes in their unreaſonable Demands about Religion; and, as it is moſt ingenuouſly obſerved by a late Writer of our Nation, ſhew themſelves now as violent in preſſing *England's* Uniformity with *Scotland*, as they were formerly in condemning the Deſign of bringing *Scotland* to an Uniformity with *England*.

'Tis not my Task to meddle with the Differences betwixt the King and his Engliſh Parliament, which I leave to the excellent Pens of that Nation; but ſure I am, there was not the leaſt Reaſon for *Scotland*'s eſpouſing the Parliaments Quarrel, or for fomenting their Jealouſies of a Prince, who had ſo lately given us ſuch undoubted Marks of his tranſcendent Bounty, in yielding to all that our Covenanters demanded; beſides, by the Explication of the Covenant, we obliged our ſelves to aſſiſt his Majeſty in every Cauſe that concern'd his Honour; and ſo ought to have been thankful for his Majeſty's Condeſcenſion, in ſuffering us to continue neutral; yet notwithſtanding theſe Obligations, The Parliament's Intereſt was ſo dear to our Commiſſioners then at *London*, that forgetting the Quality of Mediators, in which they firſt appear'd, they ſided openly with the Houſes againſt the King. Nor were our Miniſters at home leſs partial, our Pulpits did ring with Curſes againſt ſome, who

were for a Neutrality, as Enemies to the Cauſe of Chriſt, and the Reformation of *England*; all were invited to join in ſo meritorious a Work, and at length all Senſe of Duty was ſo entirely caſt off, that the chief Promoters of thoſe Deſigns adventur'd to aſſume to themſelves a moſt undoubted Prerogative of the Crown, in ſummoning a Convention of Eſtates without the King's Leave.

From a Convention call'd without Authority, there was no reaſon to expect any legal Proceedings, or Complyance to the King, who yet vouchſafed to approve of their Meeting, upon Condition, they would obſerve ſuch Limitations, as were preſcrib'd in his Letter. But the Buſineſs of *England*, and the raiſing an Army, being the only Things, which he forbid them to meddle with, were the firſt which fell under their Conſideration; and Commiſſioners being ſent from the Parliament of *England* to treat about an Army, our Convention of Eſtates, notwithſtanding the King's ſpecial Command to the contrary, received them with open Arms, agreed readily to their Demands, and expreſt ſuch an hearty Deſire of a ſtrict Union betwixt the two Kingdoms, that their warm Conſultations did in a few Days hatch the ſolemn League and Covenant.

It was ſtrange to ſee a League, which ſo highly concern'd a King, two Kingdoms, differing much in Laws and Conſtitutions, and two Churches, differing no leſs in Worſhip and Diſcipline, ſo eaſily and ſuddenly concluded. It was firſt ſeen, afterwards approved, and laſtly ſworn in the General Aſſembly, all within the ſhort Period of three Days. The Miniſters made this wonderful Unanimity paſs with the People for an undeniable Teſtimony of the Divine Approbation; tho others, who could never be convinced that the former Covenant received its Seal from Heaven, entertain'd no better Opinion of this, but did attribute their Agreement only to the dexterous Management of the Leaders, who

who had ſuch a powerful Influence and Authority over the reſt, that they ſeldom fail'd in any Thing they propoſed.

The whole Negotiation ended without any Debates. Yet there was apparent jugling on both Hands; for the Engliſh Commiſſioners had a great mind to carry with them a Scotiſh Army, but had no liking at all to our Presbytery; and therefore conſenting to a Reformation, according to the Word of God, told one another that they underſtood well enough what to make of that at home; the Scotiſh on the other Hand deſigning to get Presbytery eſtabliſh'd in *England*, caſt in the Words of *Reforming, according to the Practice of the beſt reformed Churches*, hoping this made ſure for theirs, as the moſt perfect Model that could any where be found; our Miniſters were likewiſe for abjuring Epiſcopacy as ſimply unlawful; but neither the Engliſh Commiſſioners then in *Scotland*, nor the Parliament or Aſſembly of Divines at *Weſtminſter*, thought fit afterwards to declare that Inſtitution unlawful: whereupon the Article was conceived to import only an aboliſhing of Epiſcopacy, as it was then in *England*, without condemning what the Primitive Church had allow'd in all its Purity. To deſcribe all the ſubtile Arts which were uſed, the manifeſt Eluſions and Breaches wherewith we charged *England*, and *England* us, together with the fatal Conſequences of this Covenant in both Nations, would require much pains and leiſure. It will ſuffice at preſent to make ſome brief Reflections, which may ſerve to cool our too great Fondneſs of it.

All that could be alledg'd againſt the National Covenant was of force againſt this; beſides many Material Circumſtances to render it yet more inexcuſable; for if we never find Subjects lawfully united among themſelves, without the Prince's leave, much leſs could the Subjects of one Nation take upon them to make a League with thoſe of another, contrary to the King's Command, and in Prejudice of his

Authority. Ought we not to have been contented with the Enjoyment of all we could desire at home, without medling in the Concerns of another Nation, who generally did not appear fond of an Alteration, and never were fitted for our Church-discipline? Was there no more regard due to a Soveraign, who had deserv'd so well at our hands, than even to pursue him out of his native Countrey; and grudge him that Liberty of Conscience in *England*, which he had graciously yielded to us in *Scotland*? We read of many Nations that engag'd in Wars for the Enlargement of their Soveraign's Empire, or Authority over Strangers, we alone shall be known to Posterity as guilty of helping Strangers to shake off the Allegiance due to a Prince born among our selves. But besides these general Reflexions, every one of the six Articles, whereof this Covenant consisted, lay open to several Exceptions. As

I. It seem'd hard, that every ignorant Person in *Scotland* should be obliged by Oath to endeavour the Reformation of *England*, according the Word of God and the Practice of the best reformed Churches. What knowledg, alas! could Persons of so mean Capacity or Education be presumed to have of Differences among reformed Churches, of which they were to judge upon Oath! how could they weigh the Advantages of *Holland* above *Geneva*, of *France* above *Holland*, or of *Scotland* above *France*, and accordingly endeavour the Reformation of *England*? truly 'tis to be doubted that more was here required of the meanest and weakest of the People, than many of our ablest Ministers could well have perform'd: how could such Persons examine nice Questions about Church-Government according to Scripture, which have divided the learned World? and yet the Vulgar were to judge of such, seeing by those Rules they swore to proceed. Nor do I see any shift, unless we allow them to resign their Judgment by an implicite Faith in their Teachers, which

which makes no decent Evaſion for a Reformed Church.

The ſecond Article was lyable to the ſame Exceptions with the former: They ſwore, 'To extirpate Popery, Prelacy, Superſtition, Hereſy, Schiſm, Profaneneſs, and whatſoever ſhould be found contrary to ſound Doctrine, and the Power of Godlineſs. This I take to have been a very hard Task for every one to perform, and more certainly, than ought to be required of any Man, in Things which are not plain beyond controverſy, as all ſuch Points were not then amongſt them: for we find, that one Miniſter did often inveigh againſt Opinions, as ſavouring of Popery, which another as poſitively deny'd, charging the contrary Opinions, as leading to Schiſm; and ignorant Perſons, who under pain of Perjury were equally engag'd againſt Schiſm and Popery, muſt have found ſtrange Storms, raiſed in their Minds, and their tender Conſciences dreadfully rack'd, while they could not underſtand, which of the oppoſite Opinions they might ſafely embrace.

Tho the former Part of the third Article concern'd Things of a quite different Nature, yet the Objections are much of the ſame kind, by that all were engag'd to defend the Rights and Priviledges of Parliament: But, alas! who could expect that common People ſhould be put to determine ſuch, when we hear of Debates ſtarted frequently concerning Priviledges, which the Wiſdom of our greateſt Senators is ſcarce able to accommodate, and ſeldom is it ſo done, as to anſwer all Objections, or ſatisfy every Member. Suppoſe a Parliament ſo divided, that it comes to a Breach, to what Party muſt the People then adhere, who are not able to judge, which of the two really maintains their Priviledges, where both with Confidence pretend it, and back their Pretences with plauſible Reaſons. Nothing could have been more for the Peace of the World, than that a greater Reverence had been kept up for Vows and Oaths, by not making

king them too common: But seeing our Fathers would not be satisfied without engaging Persons of all Ranks in Oaths, 'tis to be wish'd that ordinary People had only been bound to live peaceably in their Stations; to obey those who by the Laws of the Land were set over them; not to countenance Division and Faction, nor turn Statesmen and Censurers of their Superiours: for in these and the like Engagements there had only been a further Ty laid upon them to perform easy, plain, and necessary Duties, suitable to their Capacities, without medling in Matters beyond their reach. Whereas our late Covenants did unadvisedly raise such Persons above themselves, injoin'd them Things they could not discharge, and, contrary to all reason, spurr'd those on to be troublesome, who stood more in need of a Bridle to check their natural Fierceness, and the ill-grounded Opinion they had of their own Sufficiency.

By the latter Part of the third Article the Subjects Allegiance to the King was limited to the Preservation and Defence of the true Religion; as if Princes Rights, whatever they are, ought not to be maintain'd without any manner of Restriction; this was a clear Diminution of the King's just Power and Greatness, and consequently, inconsistent with what they swore before in the National Covenant: But how ill they intended from the Beginning to maintain the King's Power and Greatness, their Positions as well as their Practices do declare. If we look critically into the History of that Time, we see manifest Gradations in their Encroachments upon the Royal Authority: At their first entring into the National Covenant, it was alledg'd, that the Body of the Nation, consisting of Church and State, might unite to resist the King. Some Years after, when the Union betwixt the two Kingdoms was so vehemently carried on, it was declared lawful to assist our Neighbours in extorting from our Soveraign the same Terms for them, which of his

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Royal Bounty he had formerly vouchſafed to grant us. At laſt, we advanced a Step higher, and boldly maintain'd, That a few Aſſociate Counties might take Arms againſt the Authority both of King and Parliament; and that, having Power, they wanted not Right, upon all Occaſions, to curb the Exceſſes of Government. Now here we may obſerve that the extravagant Proceedings of ſome Weſtern Counties, upon theſe ſeditious Principles, fix'd upon them the Name of *Whigs*; which contemptible Mark of Diſtinction was for many Years appropriated to us; till of late that, to the Grief of all Men, it is become more univerſal, and has now unluckily crept into the next Kingdom; and, notwithſtanding its infamous Riſe, is there too liberally beſtow'd upon ſome, and too much gloried in by others. Thus the Barbarous Name of *Guelphs*, which had for a long Time been given to thoſe in *Germany* that oppos'd the Emperour, was at length fatally tranſplanted from its native Soil into *Italy*, a warmer Climate, where it took deeper Root, and became, for many Ages, the Fomenter of terrible Diſorders. But I hope our Prince's Wiſdom will think fit to give an early and effectual Check to this and all other Names of Faction, which inſenſibly undermine the Government, alienate Mens Affections from one another, make wicked Men more deſperate, when they ſee themſelves diſcover'd, eſpecially when by the ſame Means they are enabled to diſcover the Strength and Number of their Party, beſides many other unforeſeen Inconveniences, which may help to bring us back into our former dreadful Confuſion.

The fourth Article did, in the Judgment of many, ſet up a new Inquiſition, ſufficient to make all tremble that were diſaffected to the Cauſe; and 'tis plain their violent Courſes gave too much ground for this Complaint: ſuch as out of real Conſcience towards God, or Senſe of Duty towards their Prince, refuſed to ſign the Covenants, were, after a

ſtrange manner, declared Enemies to God and the King, proceeded againſt as Traitors, and forced either to undergo Baniſhment, or languiſh in Priſon, while their Eſtates became a Prey to thoſe, who appeared moſt zealous in perſecuting them. This inevitable Danger obliged many to diſguiſe themſelves into a ſeeming Compliance, to what in their Hearts they did deteſt. And theſe Methods being then made uſe of to ſettle the Purity of the Goſpel among us, no wonder if there were more of Hypocriſy than of the Power of Godlineſs in our Profeſſion; or, if God were thereby provok'd to diſown us and our Cauſe, and to leave the Nation for many Years to groan under an heavy Bondage.

The fifth Article, which was for executing Juſtice upon all wilful Oppoſers, falls under the ſame Exceptions with the former, and might be illuſtrated with too many Inſtances of Cruelty, which thoſe Times afford us: How were our Scaffolds dy'd with the Blood of our Nobility and Gentry, who oppos'd the Torrent, and ſtood up for the Royal Intereſt! How were Priſoners of War moſt unhumanely ſentenc'd, and put to Death, and all, that were like to create them any trouble, deſtroy'd without Mercy! I need not deſcend to any Particulars, which are ſtill too well known; and indeed as I am loth to make Strangers acquainted with them, ſo I wiſh there could be a Curtain drawn to hide ſuch Tragical Pieces from the View of After-Ages.

Their ſixth and laſt Article was a Bond of mutual Defence againſt all Oppoſers, without excepting the King; and this alone might ſerve to render the whole void: for if the Oaths of Subjects without the Prince's Conſent, in Things relating to the Publick, can never bind, much leſs then, if they directly encroach upon his Authority. If a Vow could abſolve Subjects from their Duty, or deprive the Prince of his Right, then we ſhould only be Subjects, till we vow'd

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the contrary; and thus the World might find a compendious Way to ſhake off all Dependance. But as the Vowing the Violation of any Man's Property, doth not give us a Title to do it, but only renders our Oath unlawful; ſo where it is in Prejudice of the Prince, every Circumſtance helps to condemn us. When thoſe, who retain'd any Principles of Loyalty, inſiſted upon this, they did fly to their ſincere Intentions towards the King: but nothing can ſo well explain their Meaning, as their Practices afterwards; which, for the Honour of our Nation, ought either to be buried in eternal Oblivion, or elſe ſo clearly manifeſted to the World, that the Guilty might only be infamous to Poſterity, while the ſounder Part of the Kingdom recover'd to it its native tincture of Honeſty and Loyalty.

Having given ſome ſhort Hints of the manner of entering into both Covenants, of their Nature and Deſign, I am perſuaded there needs no further Evidence of their Unlawfulneſs from the Beginning, or of their many other Nullities, to prove that they could lay no Obligation upon thoſe very Perſons, who ſubſcrib'd them; and if not upon them, much leſs upon us, who are their Children, to ſtand to what they then did. Nor do I indeed find any formal Tye upon Poſterity mention'd in either Covenant: for what is alledged from the former, where 'tis declared, 'That they are convinced in their Minds, and confeſs with their Mouths, 'that the preſent and ſubſequent Generations in this Land 'are bound to keep that National Oath and Subſcription 'inviolable; may prove perhaps that ſuch was the Opinion of our Fathers, but can never make it obligatory with us, ſeeing the granting this were to put it in every Man's Power to entail his Opinions upon thoſe who come after him: to which none of us, I preſume, will be willing to yield. But allowing matter of fact, and that there had been a poſitive Oath made by them in the name of their Poſterity: Yet this

Oath being by Authority declared unlawful, and we forbidden to observe it, the Compliance we ow to those whom God has set over us, cancels all Obligations of this kind, that our Parents could lay upon us. I shall therefore conclude, that seeing our Covenants were in so many respects unlawful from the Beginning: and seeing there was neither any formal Obligation laid upon us by our Parents to obscure them; nor yet their Authority in this Case allowable, as interfering with the Laws of the Land, there the least shadow of Reason cannot be brought in behalf of any that presume now to renew those Covenants, when the contrary is so plainly enjoin'd us by our rescissory Act of Parliament; but as such Persons proceed not upon rational Grounds, so it is in vain to think of reclaiming them by Force of Arguments; the Government must deal with this frenzy, and in its Wisdom find out a Cure suitable to so dangerous a Distemper, before the Infection spreads it self wider.

Fourth Consideration.

I should be glad to make an end here, without mentioning the last Objection; not that I apprehend any Difficulty in undertaking to answer it, but because I really blush to publish the pernicious and traiterous Principles, which some among us have of late taken up, and are not now asham'd to own, That our Soveraign has forfeited all Right to his Crown; and that his Subjects are absolv'd them their Allegiance.

'Tis plain that Princes Persons and Authority are more effectually secur'd by the Christian Religion, than by all the Contrivances of humane Policy. Fear or Interest among Heathens were the chief Motives to keep Subjects within the Bounds of their Duty, and made them submit, because they durst not rebel. Princes had outward Obedience pay'd

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them, which was all they could then either challenge or expect. But the Doctrine, taught by our bleſſed Saviour and his Apoſtles, did faſten their Crowns much ſurer, gave them a new Title to reign in their Subjects Hearts, made Subjects dutiful, more out of Conſcience than Fear; and by forbidding Reſiſtance under pain of Damnation, laid a much ſtronger Ty upon Men, than the Hazard of Lives and Fortunes, or all other humane Penalties could ever have done: And, no queſtion, had the Roman Emperours underſtood how much they were beholden to Chriſtianity, inſtead of endeavouring to extirpate it, they would have protected and encourag'd it; for as long as Chriſtians ſuffer'd themſelves to be govern'd by the Maximes which Chriſt left them, Princes were truly happy in ſuch Subjects.

Chriſt did indeed put a Sword into his Miniſters Hands, to puniſh notorious Sinners, when he gave them Power to excommunicate, or cut Men off from being Members of the Church, in depriving them of the Benefits and publick Exerciſe of their Religion: and there being no Exemption granted to any Perſon, Kings and Emperours themſelves were to fall under this heavy Cenſure, when their Offences deſerv'd it. But tho Miniſters had the Courage to ſhut them ſometimes out of Church, as St. *Ambroſe* did *Theodoſius the Great*, yet they did not pretend to thruſt them off their Thrones, or wreſt their Scepters out of their Hands. They knew that their Authority was only Spiritual, and did not therefore meddle with thoſe Priviledges, which they enjoy'd as Princes; but readily obey'd, in all other Caſes, thoſe whom they excluded from their Aſſemblies; and thus they kept within the Limits, preſcrib'd by Chriſt, for near a thouſand Years.

When the Spirit of Chriſtianity was afterwards quite ſpent, and Religion had put on a new Face, the Riches

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and Ambition of the Roman Hierarchy made them ſtretch their Authority further than Chriſt deſign'd it; and then did they begin to declare, that Princes, falling under the Cenſure of Excommunication, did forfeit their Crowns and all other their Temporal as well as Spiritual Priviledges. The great Advances *Gregory the ſeventh* and his Succeſſors made in ſeveral attempts of this kind, and their Vanity to ſee themſelves on a ſudden raiſed to an univerſal Monarchy, made them vigorouſly purſue ſuch Courſes, and thunder their Sentences of Excommunication and Forfeiture ſo liberally, that, upon every ſlight Occaſion, Princes were laid aſide, Subjects abſolv'd from their Allegiance, and Crowns and Scepters freely diſpos'd of, when and to whom they pleaſed; ſo that under Colour of maintaining Chriſt's Prerogative, they refus'd to give unto *Cæſar* what was *Cæſar's*, far from paying Tribute, as Chriſt had done, Kings were forced to turn their Tributaries; and, by ſetting up a new Power in every Kingdom, they made Princes, contrary to the Intention of Chriſt and the Goſpel, great Loſers by the Chriſtian Religion.

Under theſe heavy Preſſures had the Chriſtian World for ſeveral Ages groan'd, when God raiſed up a Spirit of Reformation in our Fathers, who, among the manifold Corruptions of *Rome*, obſerv'd the ill Treatment Princes had there met with, and reſolv'd that, in reſtoring to Chriſtianity its ancient Luſtre, Princes ſhould again be poſſeſt of the Prerogatives entail'd upon them by the Goſpel. This made the firſt Reformers inveigh ſo bitterly againſt the Uſurpations of that See, and enforce upon Subjects Allegiance and Submiſſion as Duties, from which none upon Earth could abſolve them; and we have Reaſon to believe that the Juſtice, then done to Princes, prov'd under God an effectual Means to reſcue many Nations from the Roman Yoke. Nor was Duty to Princes only preacht up at firſt, but it has ever

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ſince continued as a fixt Principle in the beſt reformed Churches, where, next to the Purity of their Doctrine and Worſhip, relating immediately to God, they have all along gloried moſt in the Loyalty of their Religion, for laying indiſpenſible Ties of Obedience upon Men towards his Vicegerent. So that, as it paſſes with many for a Maxime, that Papiſts, acting according to the Principles of their Church, can hardly be good Subjects, 'tis moſt certain that Proteſtants, who are not conſcientiouſly dutiful and loyal, ſwerve from the Principles of the Reformed Religion; and tho there are, alas! too many Inſtances of ſuch, both at home and abroad, yet their corrupt Practices muſt not ſtain the Purity of the Doctrine, by which they ſtand condemned.

But while I aſcribe to the Reformed Religion the Honour of reeſtabliſhing Princes in their Rights, I am ſorry any of my Countreymen ſhould renounce their ſhare in it, by pretending that our Soveraign has forfeited his Crown, and that we are freed from our Allegiance. Theſe, alas! are Words not hitherto known amongſt Orthodox Proteſtants, but as they meet with them in impious and condemned Writers. Let us conſult the Confeſſions of all the Reformed Churches in the World, and ſee if any of them teach this Doctrine. Let us ſend an impartial Account of our Caſe, with the Nature of our Monarchy, to all the Proteſtant Univerſities abroad, whether in *England*, *France*, *Germany*, *Holland*, *Switzerland*, or *Geneva*, and try if we can have the Teſtimony of any one Society to confirm us in this Tenet. Let us ſee if we can meet with one eminent Proteſtant Divine, one ſingle Perſon of Credit and Learning, that will own himſelf of this Perſuaſion. If we look back to the Doctrine or Practice of the Church in the Primitive Times, we can find nothing there that makes for our Purpoſe. Neither Hereſy nor Idolatry in thoſe Days did make void Princes Right to govern. *Conſtantius*, an Arrian, and *Julian*, a Renegade,

negade, were own'd for Emperours by thoſe, who deteſted their Impieties, as much as *Jovianus* or *Theodoſius*, who were Orthodox. The more degenerate Ages, and the moſt corrupt part of the Church firſt taught us the Principles, upon which ſome of us now go. We muſt look no higher than *Hildebrand*, and apply our ſelves only to proſtitute Canoniſts and Jeſuits for Teſtimonies and Arguments to prove that Princes can ſo eaſily forfeit their Crowns; for I know there are many well-meaning Papiſts, if not whole National Churches, that will utterly reject this monſtrous Doctrine. And truly then 'tis hard that we, who look upon our ſelves as the moſt thorowly Reform'd, ſhould contemn the Pattern ſet us by the Ancients, diſſent from all our Brethren, and ſide with the greateſt Enemies of our Religion in a Point, for which they have been ſo much expos'd.

Now no wonder if we run into ſtrange Abſurdities, when the whole Matter is granted upon falſe Suppoſitions: Firſt, we will have the King's Right to commence only from the Time of his Coronation: then we will have the Coronation a Compact or Agreement with the People, by which the Prince forfeits his Right, if he do not duly perform his Part: and laſtly, we ſeem to make the late Covenant paſs for the Coronation Oath: all which are inexcuſable Miſtakes. Firſt, our Laws admit of no *Interregnum*, but date the Beginning of one King's Reign from the very Inſtant that another expir'd, it being an Axiom with us, and in all other Hereditary Monarchies, that the King never dies. The fatal Blow, that depriv'd us of our late Soveraign, put the Crown immediately upon his Son's Head: From that Minute we were obliged to pay the ſame Duty to our preſent Soveraign, which till then we ow'd to his Father; and they, who reſiſted him before his Coronation, were Rebels as well as theſe who have done it ſince. Whatever therefore a Coronation might have been anciently, 'tis now only look'd upon

upon in the Nature of an Inſtalment, upon which our Prince's Title to reign doth no ways depend; elſe it would be the firſt Thing they would go about: whereas it is ordinarily put off till ſuch Time, as it can be performed with the moſt Solemnity. In the ſecond place it appears by this, that the Coronation is no ſuch Compact as deſtroys the Prince's Title, if he fail in his part; for where he has his Crown by Inheritance, his Coronation is the Effect of his Title, but not his Title of his Coronation, which can never make him loſe what it did not give him; nor yet weaken the Right, which he had upon his Predeceſſor's Death. As our King ows his Crown to his Birth, and not to any Suffrage or mutual Agreement with his People; ſo 'tis ridiculous to imagine that his Coronation alters his Right, and makes that conditional, and capable of being loſt, which was before abſolute and hereditary. In a word, if the Reign of our Princes commenced only from the Time of their being crown'd, they would be in uneaſy and dangerous Circumſtances till that were over; but, on the other hand, if their Coronation limited their Birth-right, or made their Title more precarious, they would contrive to have this Solemnity among the laſt Performances of their Lives.

Laſtly, in the Buſineſs of the Covenant there is a double Fallacy; firſt, in making it paſs for the Coronation Oath; and ſecondly, in inferring a Forfeiture of the Crown, where the Coronation Oath is broken. When we complain of the King's not making good the Covenant, we affirm that he has thereby cancell'd his Right to govern, which yet, according to our own Suppoſition, is not true, unleſs we allow the Covenant to be the Coronation Oath. But this is abſurd, ſeeing the Co-

venant is a new Thing, never heard of by his Majeſtie's Royal Anceſtors, who did all take an Oath at their Inſtalment; and as his Title to the Crown differ'd in nothing from his Father's and his Grandfather's, ſo ought his Coronation Oath to have been likewiſe the ſame. But if we took upon us to alter it, or to add the Covenant as a new Clauſe, no wonder if his Majeſty queſtion'd what we did without Authority, and refus'd to confirm ſince, what was extorted from him during the Rebellion. This is certain, that had our Repreſentatives in Parliament conſidered the Covenant, either as a part of his Majeſtie's Coronation Oath, or as an Oath lawful in it ſelf, and lawfully impos'd upon the King and his Subjects, they would never have order'd it to be abjur'd, nor have declar'd that there lay no Obligation either upon Prince or People to obſerve it. Secondly, a Forfeiture of the Crown doth not follow upon a Breach of the Coronation Oath; becauſe, as I already obſerv'd, the King has his Crown by Inheritance, not by Election; and his Right, being of a more ancient Date, can never depend upon what followed. The King was oblig'd to be a juſt Prince, and we to be dutiful Subjects, before that pretended Agreement at his Coronation; and if he ſhould have fail'd in his part, yet we were bound to make good ours, even before we ſwore any Oath of Allegiance. I confeſs the King's Oath is a further Confirmation of his Duty, and if he were guilty of any ſuch Breach, it would much aggravate his Sin; but God, before whoſe Tribunal he muſt ſtand, can only call him to an Account for it: He is the Miniſter of God, acts by his immediate Commiſſion, and he alone can cancel it. To God he forfeits his Crown, if he ſhould be found to manage it ill; and in this Caſe we were patiently to wait till Heaven thought

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fit to remove him; remembring that the greateſt Injury and Breach of Truſt was to God who employ'd him. But ſuppoſing a Forfeiture, how come the People to claim the Benefit of it, or to pretend themſelves his Heirs? In ſome extraordinary Caſes, ſuch as Frenzy, or the like, the Safety of the Kingdom may require an extraordinary Remedy, as at preſent in *Portugal*, yet even where the King's inſufficiency makes him unable to govern, Subjects are not freed from their Allegiance; if there remain any that have Right to govern as Adminiſtrators in his Name, their Station is ſtill the ſame; no perſonal Fault nor Defect in the Prince can diſſolve the Government, nor leave People to an entire Liberty of chooſing whom they will obey.

Now after all, we are as little able to prove a Breach upon the King's Part, as we are able thence to infer a Forfeiture. His Majeſty did ſwear to govern according to the fundamental Laws of the Kingdom; nor can we ſhew where ever he has broken them. Has he not, in Matters of Difficulty, vouchſafed to recur to his Great Council? has he not ſuffer'd the Laws to have their free courſe? has he ever invaded any Man's Property, or deny'd any Man Juſtice? has he ever delighted in Blood-ſhed, or given us one Inſtance of his Cruelty? So far has he been from giving Occaſion to theſe curſed Aſperſions of Tyranny and Oppreſſion, which the Enemies of our Peace do with equal Malice and Falſehood caſt upon his Government, that if, without Breach of Duty, we durſt complain of our Prince, it ſhould be of his too great Indulgence, which has hurt both himſelf and us: for 'tis plain that factious Spirits have adventur'd to diſturb our quiet, out of hopes of Impunity. But he has arrogated to himſelf, ſay ſome, King Jeſus's Right, in offering to

meddle with Spiritual Affairs. After this manner did *Gregory the ſeventh* charge the Emperour *Henry the fourth*, when he only maintain'd the Prerogatives of his Crown. Has he meddled more with Spiritual Affairs than other Princes have done? *Euſebius* thought it for the Honour of *Conſtantine* to ſet down his Words in an Aſſembly of Biſhops, where he called himſelf a Biſhop appointed by God, to ſee to the outward Settlement of the Church; and muſt it be an Encroachment upon Chriſt in his Majeſty, to do what was ſo much commended in that great Emperour? Did his Majeſty arrogate to himſelf Chriſt's Right, in rejecting that Form of Government which was brought in by Rebellion, or in reſtoring that Order and Decency, which were then baniſh'd? did he arrogate too much to himſelf, in being zealous to perform his martyr'd Fathers Will, or to ſuppreſs Schiſm? In theſe Things, ſure, he acted rather in the quality of a nurſing Father, and diſcharg'd no ſmall Part of his Truſt; for what more acceptable Service could he have done to Chriſt, than to interpoſe his Royal Authority, in promoting a bleſſed Uniformity amongſt us?

There remains yet one ſtrange Article againſt his Majeſty, ſuch an one as I'm confident the World has not hitherto been acquainted with, and that is the Sentence of Depoſition laſtly paſt upon him in a pretended Convention of Eſtates, as we learn from the *Lanrick* Declaration. But ſeeing we have ſo lame an Account of this Buſineſs, I hope they will be pleaſed to tell us, when, where, and by what Authority that Aſſembly was call'd, of whom it conſiſted, what Lords Spiritual and Temporal ſate there: for without them, in our Government, there can be no Convention of Eſtates: who preſided there in his Majeſtie's Name; it being alſo neceſſary that he ſhould have had

had his Repreſentative. In the mean Time, before an Anſwer be returned to theſe Enquiries, we are fully ſatisfied, that as they met without the King's Authority, and upon a moſt wicked Deſign, ſo their Rebellious Conventicle muſt not be called a Convention of Eſtates: It was a ſecond high Court of Juſtice, and another *Bradſhaw* no doubt was their Preſident; this arraign'd the King, as the former did his Father; nor could he have eſcap'd their barbarous Cruelty, had he been within their Reach. The extravagant Proceedings at *Weſtminſter* againſt our late Royal Martyr, have neither been ſo much for the Glory of our Neighbours, nor for our own Intereſt, as to tempt any among us to follow their black Example, and act the ſecond Part of a Tragedy, which nothing, in Modern nor Ancient Hiſtory, can parallel; and upon which it was hop'd Poſterity would have look'd back with Horrour. But the Members of the late mock-Convention among us, have, to their eternal Infamy, approv'd of what was done in the high Court of Juſtice, by their attempting to renew it: and when all true Proteſtants and good Subjects would be willing to buy off the Guilt and Ignominy of that atrocious Crime at any rate, theſe Men would help to tranſfer it upon us, or at leaſt would have us engag'd in a Villany of the ſame kind. Our own Hiſtory furniſhes us already with too many Inſtances of Kings either aſſaſſinated, poiſon'd, or kill'd in open Rebellion; but never, till of late, were we known to put off all Senſe of Modeſty as well as Duty, and, in Contempt of Divine and Human Laws, to trample upon the Throne, arraign our Soveraign before us as a Criminal, and, by a ſacrilegious Uſurpation of God's Right, paſs Sentence of Depoſition upon him.

What Apprehenſions muſt the moderate Proteſtants abroad

abroad have of our Zeal, when they hear of this dreadful Sentence of Depoſition, and that of Excommunication iſſu'd out by *Cargil*, in the Name of the *true Presbyterian Kirk of Scotland*? the former forbidding us to obey the King, and the latter to pray for him. With what Amazement will it ſtrike them, when they ſee the utmoſt Extent of theſe Sentences, which begin with the King, but bring in the beſt Part of the Kingdom, all Officers of the Crown, Privy Councellors, Judges, Magiſtrates, Officers of the Army, Guards, and other Souldiers, who are more immediately mark'd out for Deſtruction, as being either Perſons in truſt, or Adherers to the Government? Nor are the Orthodox Clergy, men everywhere ſacred by their Profeſſion, to be here exempted; with them they have begun, and ſhew'd in the Perſon of our late moſt reverend Metropolitan, what the reſt may expect, if the Malice of that Party be once arm'd with Power: ſo that before theſe Sentences be executed according to their full extent, we are like to be in the lamentable Condition of the Egyptians, we ſhall not have an Houſe without ſome one or other dead in it; only in this we differ, the Angel of the Lord deſtroy'd their Firſt-born, whereas we are deſign'd to deſtroy one another. It is really ſtrange how Men, that have thus ſhaken off all the Ties of Religion and Nature, and own ſuch bloody and deſperate Principles, are not ſometimes afraid, leſt our Neighbours, when theſe Things are publiſhed abroad, ſhould take the Alarm, and join with thoſe in danger at home, to cut them off as avow'd Enemies to their Native Prince, their Country, and their Friends, and conſequently to all Mankind: But as they appear yet to be only Perſons of mean Quality, and not very numerous in reſpect of the reſt of the Kingdom, ſo

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the Pitch of extravagance, which they are now arriv'd at, ſecures them in a great Meaſure from Vengeance, and makes them the Objects of Pity, as Perſons diſtemper'd with a violent Phrenzy, and who, for the publick Safety, are to be kept in Chains, rather than deſtroy'd, and treated as brainſick Perſons, till they recover. And truly it may be worth our Governours Time to conſider, whether any ſo proper Method has been yet thought of for ſuch, as to remove them from Priſons to Houſes of Correction; not to do them the Honour to bring them before Judicatures to revile the higher Powers, nor to Pillories nor Scaffolds, to confirm the reſt of their Party by their obſtinate Sufferings; not to condemn them to dy as Martyrs, but to continue under ſevere Taſkmaſters, till Time, hard Labour, and the ſeaſonable Diſcourſes of diſcreet Perſons, appointed for this Purpoſe, may, by God's Bleſſing, prove the effectual Means to cool their Heats, remove their Scruples, and reſtore them again to their right Wits.

FINIS.